THE Valley INDEPENDENT
An Edition of the TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Penguins prevail in shootout

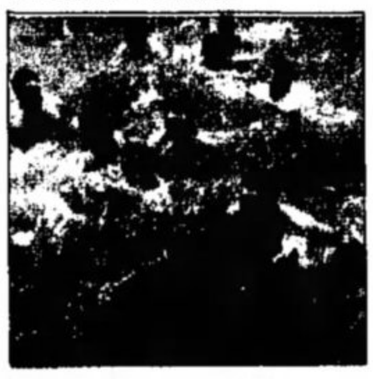
Sidney Crosby scored the winning goal in the NHL's outdoor spectacular in Buffalo. **1B**

Valley Business

The business community was hard at work building the Mon Valley economy in 2007. **8A**

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2008 RELEVANT, RELIABLE WWW.VALLEYINDEPENDENT.COM 50¢

INSIDE TODAY



Bears take dive

Polar Bear clubbers across the region began the year in chilly fashion. **3A**

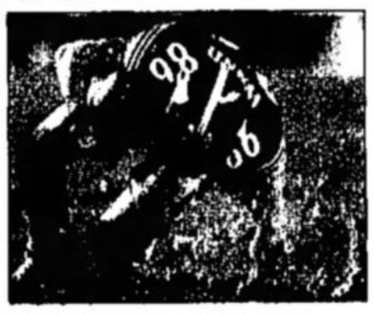
Stumping still

In a race too close to call, both Republicans and Democrats campaigned to the very end as the Iowa caucuses drew near. **4A**

Onorato on rise

Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onorato's power has risen incredibly in a short time. **3A**

SPORTS



Taylor rips field

Jacksonville running back Fred Taylor doesn't like Heinz Field. **1B**

No excuses

The Steelers' depth chart is more shallow than ever, but Mike Tomlin said expectations remain the same. **1B**

Perry honored

Monessen soccer coach Sam Perry is the Class A Section 4 Coach of the Year. **2B**

Support needed

Brian Herman is calling on fans and businesses to support the RiverRats. **1B**

DEATHS

- Antonio Edward "Tony" Cervantes, 63, Monessen
- Marcia A. McGinley Glenn, 83, New Bedford, Mass., formerly of Charleroi
- John N. Jarvis, 84, Forward Township
- Edward L. Sullenberger Sr., 56, of Fallowfield Township

Page 4A

WEATHER

Tonight
Snow 12°
Tomorrow
Mostly cloudy 22°

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Two sections, 16 Pages

TOMORROW

Read Valley Entertainment, which appears each Thursday in *The Valley Independent.*

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Insurance fraud costly

The average family pays $300 extra each year because of such criminal activity.

By MIKE CRONIN
For The Valley Independent
mcronin@tribweb.com

So Allegheny County police accuse a McKeesport couple of swindling three car insurance companies out of roughly $20,000.

Who cares?

Everyone should, says Ralph Burnham, executive director of the Pennsylvania Insurance Fraud Prevention Authority.

"It's a crime we all pay for, because the losses incurred by insurance companies eventually are passed on to our premiums," Burnham said from his Mechanicsburg office. "Fraud jacks up the cost of our insurance. When fraud happens, everyone loses."

Such fraud increases the average Pennsylvania family's insurance bill by $300, the authority states.

To keep those costs from rising any higher, Burnham and law enforcement officers throughout the state publicize high-profile insurance fraud cases. Allegheny County police Detective Thomas Capp said he and his colleagues hope to reduce the incidence of insurance fraud by increasing awareness.

From 1996 to 2006, agencies funded by the prevention authority convicted 2,272 people of fraud. Statistics for 2007 won't be available until later this month, but state authorities convicted 441 individuals last year for insurance fraud.

Two Allegheny cases appear in this year's "Unlucky 13" list of Pennsylvania's most memorable and outrageous cases, which the prevention authority releases annually. In addition to the McKeesport couple, the group cited a case involving seven county residents who were convicted of filling more than $70,000 worth of phony prescriptions for painkillers.

"People are aware of things like homicides and drug cases, while fraud and other white-collar crimes are kind of put aside," Capp said. "But it's mind-boggling how much of it is out there."

Many perpetrators attempt to

(See FRAUD, Page 2A)

Fayette avoids tax rate increase

The county commissioners will not receive salary hikes in 2008.

By LIZ ZEMBA
For The Valley Independent
lzemba@tribweb.com

UNIONTOWN – The Fayette County commissioners have passed a budget for 2008 that holds the line on taxes.

In enacting the $22 million spending plan, the commissioners on Tuesday eliminated a projected $1.4 million shortfall.

Vicites

Commissioner Vincent Vicites said $750,000 in expenses were cut. The board increased revenue estimates, based on data obtained over the past several weeks.

"We went line item by line item, to reflect more what was spent last year," Vicites said. "We lowered expenditures, realistically, to where they should be."

Property taxes will remain at 3.5 mills, with 1 mill generating $4 million.

The commissioners included $170,000 in the budget for electronic voting machines, according to Commissioner Angela Zimmerlink, who chairs the panel.

Zimmerlink said her research showed 45 to 55 machines are needed to help reduce waiting times at polls. She added that wait times will be further cut by additional public demonstrations of the devices and training poll workers.

Zimmerlink said she wants the board to approve the purchase during the next several days to expedite delivery.

Included in next year's budget are 3 percent cost-of-living wage increases for union workers and 3.5 percent increases for nonunion employees.

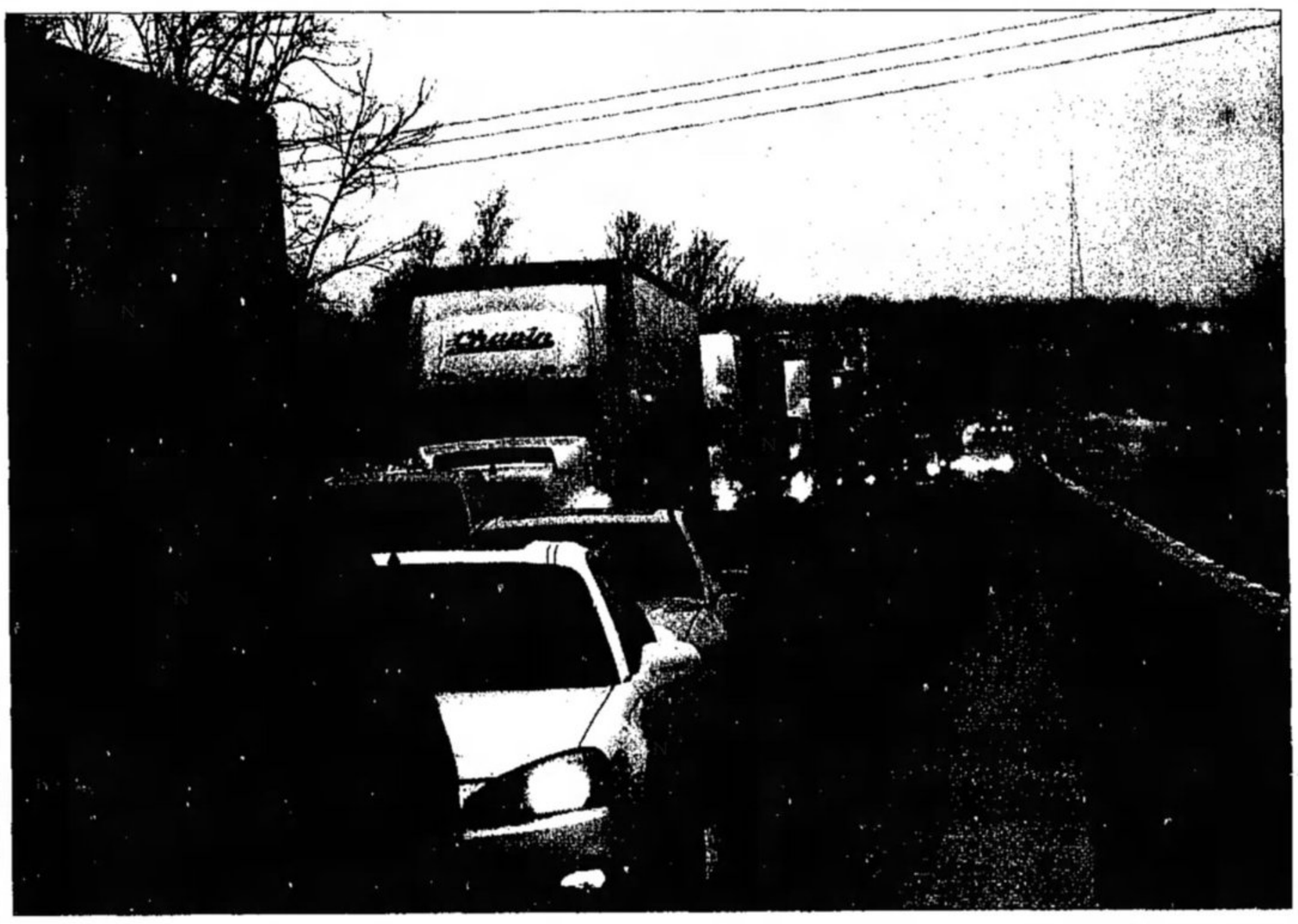
Pay rates for commissioners and row officers will stay the same as last year, with commissioners receiving $47,970 and row officers $44,837.

Zimmerlink did not accept some $7,000 in salary increases during her first four years in office, but will begin her second term at the same salary as her fellow commissioners.

Zimmerlink said she will assume her new term at the current rate because that is the established salary. She promised to refuse additional pay hikes during the rest of her second term.

The commissioners hired Sara Roziek as planning director at an annual salary of $33,267 and Sarah Thomas as director of the Tax Claim Bureau at an annual salary of $26,286.

(See FAYETTE, Page 2A)



Jim Ference/The Valley Independent

Motorists faced sloppy, snow-covered roads early this morning. And to further slow the morning commute, drivers on Interstate 70 sat in a traffic jam caused by a truck crash.

Mon Valley communities dodge heavy snow blast

Forecasters are calling for unseasonably warm weather next week.

By JEFF OLIVER
Staff Writer
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Whew!

That likely was the collective sentiment of most Mid-Mon Valley residents when they woke up this morning to find that the expected winter storm bypassed the area.

While some Fayette County communities such as Connellsville received 6 inches of snow overnight and mountainous areas as Farmington received 15 inches of snow, less than 2 inches fell in the Valley, according to the National Weather Service.

Meteorologist John Darnley of the National Weather Service's Moon Township office, said snow was expected to taper off in the Mid-Mon Valley by 9 a.m. with only a trace of snow expected the rest of the day.

However, the National Weather Service does have a winter storm warning in effect until 1 p.m. today for all of Westmoreland and Fayette counties.

"Some parts of Westmoreland and Fayette got hit a little harder than others," Darnley said.

Early risers were greeted by chilling temperatures as the thermometer dipped to 17 degrees with a wind chill factor of just 7. That's because winds as great as 35 mph were blowing through the area.

Today's high is expected to hit 27 degrees.

The forecast for Tuesday calls for a low of 18 and a high of 27 with snow flurries expected early. The National Weather Service is calling for little accumulation.

Darnley added that there will be windy conditions continuing through Tuesday, but not forceful enough to call for a wind advisory.

However, Darnley said the wind and snow will combine to make driving somewhat tenuous because of areas of potential blowing and drifting snow.

> "Some parts of Westmoreland and Fayette got hit a little harder than others."
> METEOROLOGIST JOHN DARNLEY

The cold spell is expected to last through Thursday. After that temperatures are expected to climb into the 40s by the weekend.

A look to next week has the National Weather Service calling for uncharacteristic warm weather with temperatures in the high 50s and possibly hitting 60 degrees.

Minorities receive less painkillers

The situation is particularly evident in kidney stone cases.

By CARLA K. JOHNSON
Associated Press Writer

CHICAGO – Emergency room doctors are prescribing strong narcotics more often to patients who complain of pain, but minorities are less likely to get them than whites, a new study finds.

Even for the severe pain of kidney stones, minorities were prescribed narcotics such as oxycodone and morphine less frequently than whites.

The analysis of more than 150,000 emergency room visits over 13 years found differences in prescribing by race and ethnicity in both urban and rural hospitals, in all U.S. regions and for every type of pain.

"The gaps between whites and nonwhites have not appeared to close at all," said study co-author Dr. Mark Pletcher of the University of California, San Francisco.

The study appears in today's's Journal of the American Medical Association. Prescribing narcotics for pain in emergency rooms rose during the study, from 23 percent of those complaining of pain in 1993 to 37 percent in 2005.

The increase coincided with changing attitudes among doctors who now regard pain management as a key to healing. Doctors in accredited hospitals must ask patients about pain, just as they monitor vital signs such as temperature and pulse.

Even with the increase, the racial gap endured. Linda Simoni-Wastila of the University of Maryland, Baltimore, School of Pharmacy said the race gap finding, may reveal some doctors' suspicions that minority patients could be drug abusers lying about pain to get narcotics.

The irony, she said, is that blacks are the least likely group to abuse

(See LESS, Page 2A)

VALLEY PEOPLE

Tretter leaving force but not Boys in Blue

The Monessen Hilltop firefighters now play a major role.

By JEFF OLIVER
Staff Writer
joliver@tribweb.com

MONESSEN – The Boys in Blue Christmas program touched more than 300 children and senior citizens this holiday season with gifts of toys and food.

Founder Gary Tretter said the tremendous success of the program – in its 10th year – would not have been possible without the help of many people.

"First and foremost, I have to thank the members of Monessen Hilltop firemen for their help," said Tretter, a lieutenant on the Monessen police force.

Tretter will leave the department today for a security job with Intermediate Unit 1 in Brownsville.

"The firemen have been helping me for three years now, but they really stepped up this year," Tretter said. "To be honest, they raised most of the money. This thing has gotten so big I could never do it by myself."

This year, the Boys in Blue program raised more than $4,000. It began as a fundraiser to provide Christmas gifts to disadvantaged city children.

However, in recent years, the program expanded to include older shut-ins.

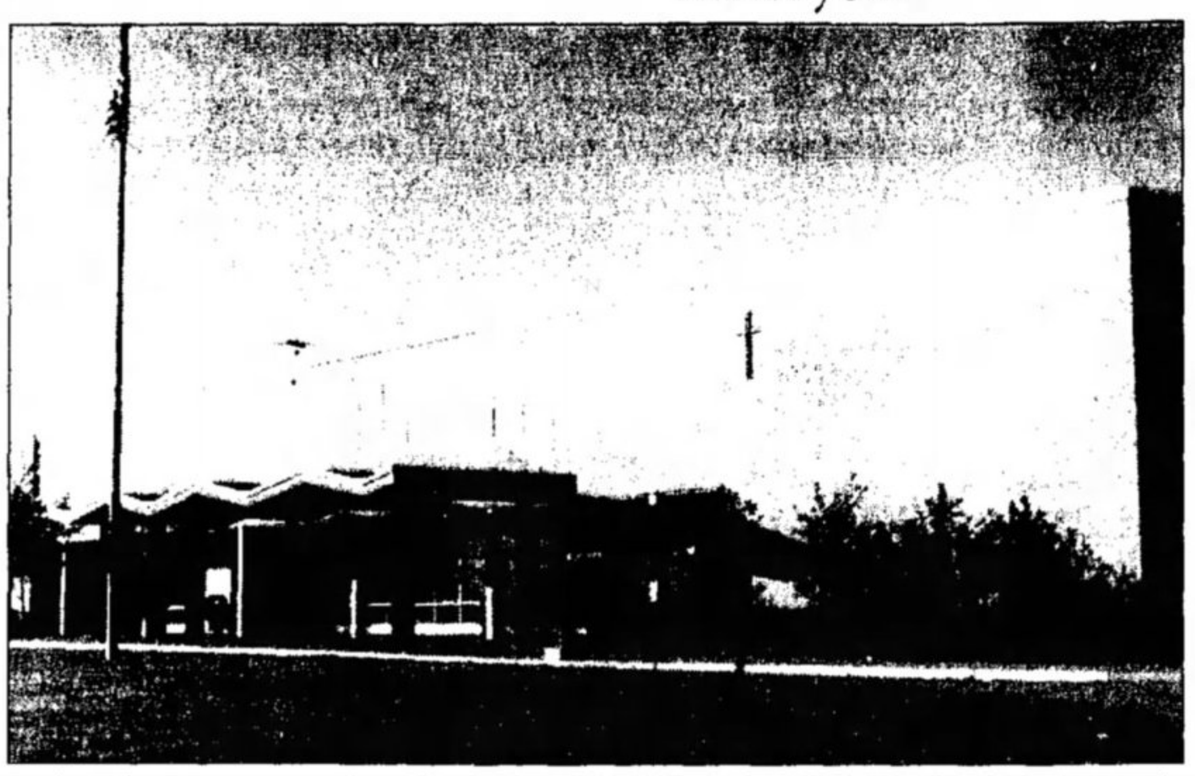
Tretter said that along with the firefighters, numerous friends and relatives have been with him from the start to raise money, buy gifts and distribute them.

Tretter is leaving the police department, but the program will continue.

"We're going to run it out of Steel City Grill," he said of a bar and restaurant co-owned by his wife.

"The firemen have pledged their cooperation next year, so I think we will be OK."

Yesteryear



This photograph of the former Monongahela Valley Catholic High School was taken in the mid-1980s. The building was razed in 2001 to make way for the Mon Valley Care Center on Coyle-Curtin Road in Carroll Township.

If you have a good oldtime photograph, send it to us at Eastgate 19, Monessen, Pa., 15062.

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Weather

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
High 22 Low 13	High 35 Low 22	High 45 Low 35	High 55 Low 40	High 54 Low 40

Unmanned aircraft use rising

The drones are being used in Iraq to battle against insurgents.

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON – The military's reliance on unmanned aircraft that can watch, hunt and sometimes kill insurgents has soared to more than 500,000 hours in the air, largely in Iraq, The Associated Press has learned.

And new Defense Department figures obtained by The AP show that the Air Force more than doubled its monthly use of drones from January to October, forcing it to take pilots out of the air and shift them to remote flying duty to meet part of the demand.

The dramatic increase in the development and use of drones across the armed services reflects what will be an even more aggressive effort over the next 25 years, according to the new report.

The jump in Iraq coincided with the build up of U.S. forces this summer as the military swelled its ranks to quell the violence in Baghdad. But Pentagon officials said that even as troops begin to slowly come home this year, the use of Predators, Global Hawks, Shadows and Ravens will not likely slow.

"I think right now the demand for the capability that the unmanned system provides is only increasing," said Army Col. Bob Quackenbush, deputy director for Army Aviation. "Even as the surge ends, I suspect the deployment of the unmanned systems will not go down, particularly for larger systems."

For some Air Force pilots, that means climbing out of the cockpit and heading to places such as Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, where they can remotely fly the Predators, one of the larger and more sophisticated unmanned aircraft.

About 120 Air Force pilots were recently transferred to staff the drones to keep pace with demands, the Air Force said.

Some National Guard members were also called up to staff the flights. And more will be doing that in the coming months, as the Air Force adds bases where pilots can remotely fly the aircraft. Locations include North Dakota, Texas, Arizona and California, and some are already operating.

One key reason for the increase is that U.S. forces in Iraq grew from 15 combat brigades to 20 over the spring and early summer, boosting troop totals from roughly 135,000 to more than 165,000.

Slowly over the next six months, five brigades are being pulled out of Iraq that will not be replaced, as part of a drawdown announced by the administration, which began in December.

The increased military operations all across Iraq last summer triggered greater use of the drones and an escalating call for more of the systems.

Fayette (FROM PAGE ONE)

The commissioners voted 2-1, with Vicites in opposition, to have the Pittsburgh law firm Reed Smith handle its appeal of zoning enforcement notices on properties owned by the Cellurale family in Dunbar Township.

Zimmerlink said the firm offered to handle the case at no charge.

Marilyn Cellurale, who attended the meeting, said she doubted the firm came forward on its own. No one from Reed Smith returned a call yesterday seeking comment.

The Cellurales' property is located off Route 119 at Mt. Braddock, in front of the historic Isaac Meason house.

The Cellurales and the owners of the house, Terry and Diane Kriss, have been at odds over alleged zoning violations at the Cellurales' auto-body shop and garden center for more than a decade

Fraud (FROM PAGE ONE)

remain hidden by collecting a few thousand dollars for each scam, Capp said.

McKeesport's Jason Belyeu, 27, and his wife Cheri McDonnell, 27, face multiple felony charges for claiming up to $2,500 per fabricated accident, Capp said.

Neither Belyeu's attorney, Alonzo Burney, of McKeesport, nor McDonnell's attorney, Leo C. Harper Jr., of Uptown, could be reached for comment.

Their scheme, Capp said, worked like this: Every three weeks or so, from Sept. 19, 2005, to March 30, 2006, a woman would claim responsibility for hitting a parked, unoccupied car.

Each time, Progressive, Nationwide or Safe Auto insurance companies sent a check to pay for damages to Belyeu, Capp said.

Belyeu persuaded a number of women to pretend they hit his car and admit fault, and he would pay them, Capp said.

The scheme raised suspicion when McDonnell bought a policy from Progressive using the name of a female tenant renting one of Belyeu's properties. That woman called a Progressive agent after receiving some mail and requested an investigation, Capp said.

After hundreds of hours combing records, law enforcement officials charged charged Belyeu with five counts each of insurance fraud and conspiracy to commit fraud and three counts of identity theft, Capp said.

McDonnell faces more than 21 years in jail for three counts of insurance fraud, three counts of conspiracy to commit fraud and three counts of identity theft.

Belyeu faces more than 35 years in jail if convicted, Capp said.

They are scheduled to stand trial March 3 before Common Pleas Judge Randal Todd.

"We want to educate folks across Pennsylvania that this is something that happens in their communities," Burnham said.

"We want people to report it."

Less (FROM PAGE ONE)

prescription drugs. Hispanics are becoming as likely as whites to abuse prescription opioids and stimulants, according to her research. She was not involved in the current study.

The study's authors said doctors may be less likely to see signs of painkiller abuse in white patients, or they may be undertreating pain in minority patients.

Patient behavior may play a role, Pletcher said. Minority patients "may be less likely to keep complaining about their pain or feel they deserve good pain control," he said.

Stricter protocols for prescribing narcotics may help close the gap.

A New York hospital recently studied its emergency patients and found no racial disparity in narcotics prescribed for broken bones.

Montefiore Medical Center aggressively treats pain and is developing protocols for painkillers that dictate initial dosages and times to check with patients to see if they need more pain medicine, said Dr. David Esses, emergency department associate director at Montefiore.

Such standards may eliminate racial disparities, Esses said.

In the study, opioid narcotics were prescribed in 31 percent of the pain-related visits involving whites, 28 percent for Asians, 24 percent for Hispanics and 23 percent for blacks.

Minorities were slightly more likely than whites to get aspirin, ibuprofen and similar drugs for pain.

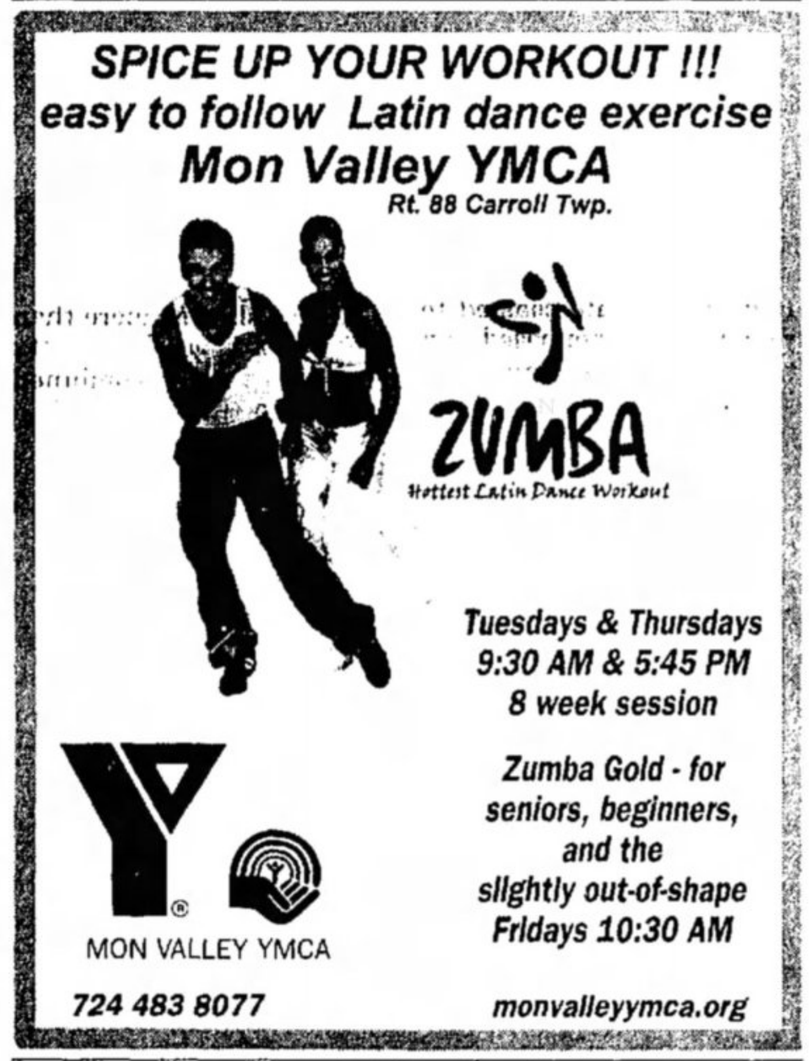
In more than 2,000 visits for kidney stones, whites got narcotics 72 percent of the time, Hispanics 68 percent, Asians 67 percent and blacks 56 percent.

The data came from a well-regarded government survey that collects information on emergency room visits for four weeks each year from 500 U.S. hospitals. The new study was funded by federal grants.

"It's time to move past describing disparities and work on narrowing them," said Dr. Thomas L. Fisher, an emergency room doctor at the University of Chicago Medical Center who was not involved in the study.

Fisher, who is black, said he is not immune to letting subconscious assumptions inappropriately influence his work as a doctor.

"If anybody argues they have no social biases that sway clinical practice, they have not been thoughtful about the issue or they're not being honest with themselves," he said



Valley briefs

Layton Bridge detour planned

The Layton Bridge, which carries Layton Road over the Youghiogheny River in Perry Township, will be closed to traffic from daybreak Saturday through dusk Sunday.

The weekend closure will be in place so structural steel repairs can be made.

Officials said a marked detour will take motorists on Banning Layton Road/Dawson Road, Cunningham School Road, Route 819, Front Street/Dickerson Run Road, Route 201 and Cemetery Road.

Presbytery brass due in court Friday

Washington Presbytery officials are expected in court on Friday to contest a claim to church property by a western Pennsylvania congregation that voted to leave the national church.

A property dispute arose after members of the Peters Creek Presbyterian Church, of Canonsburg, voted in November to leave the Presbyterian Church USA and join the Evangelical Presbyterian Church based in Livonia, Mich.

Peters Creek church members say they joined the more evangelical church because it more closely follows biblical teachings on the Trinity, salvation and some social issues, including not allowing the ordination of gay clergy.

The head of the Washington Presbytery will soon leave to become pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Dearborn, Mich.

Homicides rise in Allegeny County

Like their counterparts in other metropolitan areas, law enforcement officials in Allegheny County raised flags this summer of a record-setting pace for homicides.

Despite an increase in slayings in the suburbs, though, 2007 fell well short of being the deadliest year.

The county finished with 98 homicides - up from 96 in 2006 but below the 125 record set in 2003, according to the medical examiner's office.

Pittsburgh accounted for 57 of the killings, far behind its deadliest year, 1993, when 83 people were killed in the city.

The 41 suburban deaths recorded by the medical examiner's office during the past year, however, came close to the 44 mark set in 2003.

James Knox/For The Valley Independent

Members of the Pittsburgh chapter of the Polar Bear Club experience the balmy 39-degree waters in the Monongahela River on Tuesday.

Local polar bear clubs continue chilly tradition

Annual New Year's Day plunge was started by Charleroi's Gus Brickner Sr. in 1949.

By JIM RITCHIE
For The Valley Independent
jritchie@tribweb.com

A disheveled group of people wearing a motley variety of bath robes, pajamas and swimming trunks rolled into the Mon Wharf at 9 a.m. Tuesday.

Snowflakes started falling about 9:15 a.m. Fifteen minutes later, most of the clothing followed, and the group plunged in unison into the 39-degree Monongahela River.

The Pittsburgh chapter of the Polar Bear Club kept to its New Year's Day tradition by gathering at the Downtown parking lot and jumping into the normally frigid river.

"This is my first time," said Frank Halling of the city's North Side, dripping wet and smiling. "I came back from Iraq, and I decided to live life a little more because it wasn't very fun there."

North Huntingdon's Frank Nelson is among the veteran Polar Bear Club members. He made his 43rd jump yesterday.

"There's not really a formal club," Nelson said. "You just show up, and you're part of the club."

Polar Bear groups have been organized in cities across North America.

The Pittsburgh club sold $10 T-shirts commemorating the 2008 event and said all profits would be donated to Project Bundle Up, a program that helps provide winter apparel for those in need.

Jumping or swimming in ice-cold water is done in many countries.

In Pittsburgh, most people show up wearing what they slept in and wrap themselves afterward in towels and blankets.

The event is viewed by some as an annual rejuvenation and others as a family tradition.

"I do it for good luck," said Matt Schirra of Canonsburg. "And I had a fantastic year last year."

Some believe jumping in the cold water offers some health benefit, but there's no evidence backing the claim. Mostly, it's just people having fun, said Dr. Paul Phrampus, assistant professor of medicine at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center's Department of Emergency Medicine.

"Essentially, for healthy people without cardiac problems, there's no real down side to the brief exposure to hypothermic conditions," he said.

Doctors induce hypothermia in patients with some brain injuries and cardiac arrest to prevent further injury, Phrampus said.

The gathering attracts newcomers each year and, as long as temperatures aren't single-digit, draws large crowds. About 200 people jumped into the Mon yesterday.

The tradition was begun by Charleroi resident Gus Brickner Sr. in 1949.

His son, Gus Brickner Jr., recalled accompanying his father to Pittsburgh for the annual New Year's Day swims. He recalled that his father encouraged other Polar Bear Club members to not just make a quick dip in the river, but take a prolonged swim with him.

Gus Brickner Sr. was an accomplished swimmer. "The Human Polar Bear" is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records for career distance swimming of 38,512 miles.

Brickner was also well-known for twice trying to swim the English Channel.

The last time he attempted the swim was Aug. 2, 1960.

Diving in off the French coast of Calais, Brickner was pulled from the water only 100 yards from the Dover, England, shore as he was losing consciousness. His 34-mile swim lasted nearly 15 hours.

The elder Brickner also made the Guiness Book of World Records in 1983 by diving into the chilly Monongahela River in Dunlevy when the air temperature was 18 degrees below zero and the water temperature was 32.

He passed away in December 1991.

As a teen, Gus Brickner Jr. would accompany his father for swims in the Monongahela through November, but he never took the dip in the frigid New Year's Day swims. He still officiates swimming, having competed on the high school and college levels before coaching swimming at Charleroi Area High school.

He said the Polar Bears swims bring back fond memories with his father. They would ride the bus from the valley to Pittsburgh, stay in a hotel over night and celebrate the New Year before his father made the traditional swim.

"Some days, the weather would be so bad that there were only a few reporters there and other days there would be a couple of hundred people there," the younger Brickner said.

Onorato transformed from Pittsburgh pol to Pennsylvania power

A major second-term goal is further consolidation of local government.

By JUSTIN VELLUCCI
For The Valley Independent
jvellucci@tribweb.com

In less than a decade, Dan Onorato has transformed from a Pittsburgh councilman battling noise in the North Side into a seasoned politician some call the third most powerful elected leader in the state.

Onorato

His tenure as chief executive of Allegheny County - which starts a second four-year term today - has encountered obstacles, from a cash-strapped Port Authority, budget deficits and property assessment headaches to a controversial drink tax, a sometimes-lackluster economy, and US Airways' gradual migration out of Pittsburgh International Airport.

Onorato, 46, a Democrat from Brighton Heights, responded with fiscal conservatism and efforts to hold the line on property taxes, analysts said. In November, four years after ousting Republican county Chief Executive Jim Roddey, Onorato coasted to re-election, unopposed, on the Democratic and GOP tickets.

"His great success has been in creating and maintaining political control," said Robert P. Strauss, an economics and public policy professor at Carnegie Mellon University. "With that kind of political clout, I think the question is: What's he going to do in a second term?"

Onorato is expected to lay out an agenda today. A few points appear clear.

He said he wants to further consolidate local government and prepare more shovel-ready land for developers in his second term. He has pledged to help tackle Port Authority's legacy costs, such as health care benefits for retirees, while reforming how the agency spends money.

He plans to privatize some park facilities and focus on Pittsburgh International Airport, where officials hope to develop more international flights and a direct cargo route to China.

"My goal in a second term is to continue to turn the region around, and I believe the numbers are starting to look really good," Onorato said.

Onorato will keep working to hold the line on property taxes, said Joseph Sabino Mistick, a Duquesne University law professor.

"Holding the line is no small thing," Mistick said.

Some of Onorato's proposals have sent county lawyers to court.

In June, Common Pleas Judge R. Stanton Wettick ruled the 2002 base-year property assessment system backed by Onorato was unconstitutional. The county is appealing the ruling to the state Supreme Court.

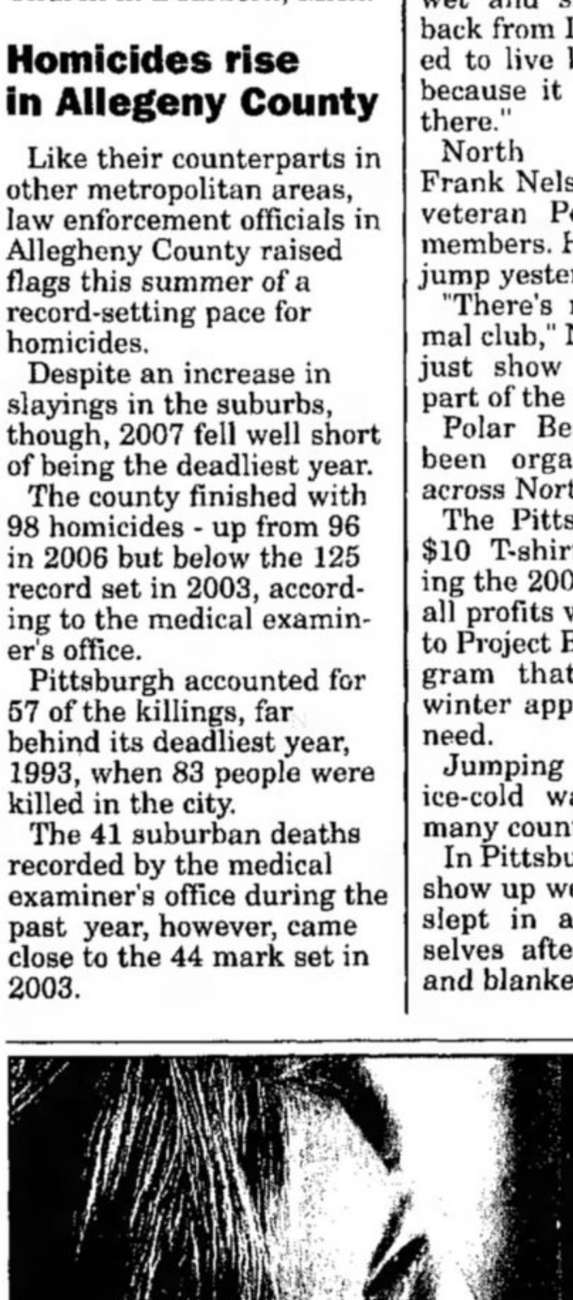
Onorato supported a controversial county smoking ban and the 10 percent alcoholic drink tax, both of which were met with opposition and lawsuits. A Commonwealth Court judge overturned the smoking ban in May.

He has slashed more than 600 jobs from the county payroll, which combined cost more than $30 million in salaries, he has said.

In 2004, Onorato cut 500 jobs, 475 of which remain off the payroll. Two hundred more county jobs were pegged for elimination by Tuesday - 121 through voluntary separation, 54 through attrition and 25 through layoffs, he said.

In the recent round of cuts, Kane Regional Centers lost 70 jobs, the most, followed by 28 in public

(See ONORATO, Page 4A)



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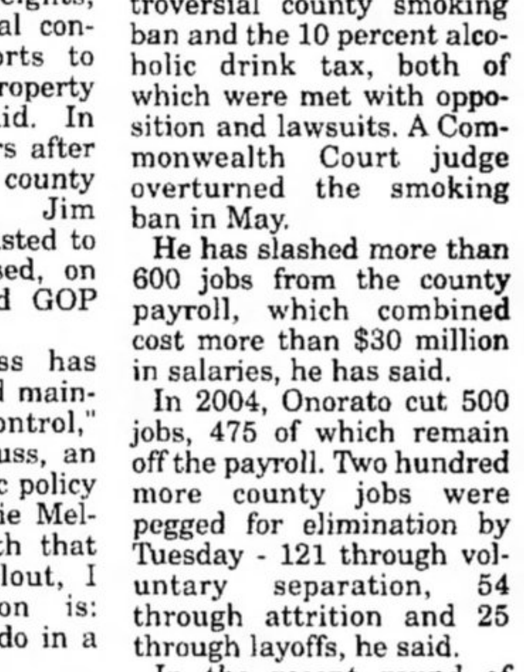

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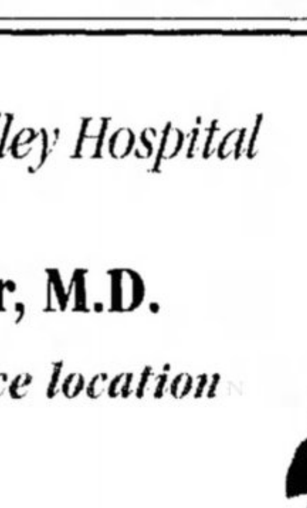
Monongahela, PA 15063
724-483-4150



MVH is pleased to announce the relocation of Dr. John Hauser's office to the Spartan Medical Facility.

Dr. Hauser specializes in Gastroenterology (the branch of medicine that treats diseases and disorders affecting the gastrointestinal tract).

Patients are treated by appointment.

MVH Monongahela Valley Hospital
HEALTH CARE

Iowa caucus countdown

Voter appeals replace insults

Given the tightness of the race, turning out voters will be critical.

By LIZ SIDOTI
Associated Press Writer

DES MOINES, Iowa — Uplifting appeals largely replaced stinging insults Tuesday as Democratic and Republican candidates did the only thing left to do in Iowa races that are too close to call — encourage supporters to vote for them.

"The polls look good, but understand this — the polls are not enough. The only thing that counts is whether or not you show up to caucus," Democrat Barack Obama told a fired-up crowd of young and old packed into a high school gymnasium.

Amid murmurs of "Amen!" at a pizza parlor in Sergeant Bluff, Republican Mike Huckabee urged hundreds: "Don't go alone. Take people with you. Fill up your car. Rent a van. Hijack your church's bus, whatever you've got to do to get people to the caucus who are going to vote for me."

Candidates made the pitch repeatedly as they canvassed the state for Thursday's caucuses, the first votes of the presidential nominating process. At least 130,000 Democrats and 80,000 Republicans are expected to participate in 1,781 neighborhood meetings at schools, fire stations and community centers across Iowa on what is forecast to be a clear but cold night.

New polls show both races competitive, the outcomes extraordinarily unpredictable.

Among Democrats, Obama, an Illinois senator, is fighting with Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York for the lead as former Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina gives them strong chase. Two former governors, Huckabee of Arkansas and Mitt Romney of Massachusetts, are vying for first on the Republican side.

Given the tightness, turning out voters will be critical.

Thus, hordes of volunteers made thousands of get-out-the-vote phone calls Tuesday, the campaigns rolled out uplifting television ads and the candidates made their pitches on the first day of 2008. The efforts were intended to maximize media exposure and voter outreach.

There were signs that Democratic voters are more energized than Republicans.

Democrat Joe Biden, who ranks in the low single digits in polls, attracted 500 people to a noontime event at a Des Moines brewery — a bigger crowd than any Republican candidate usually gets.

Obama's campaign drew at or over capacity crowds. When he asked for a show of hands, many people said they'd never been to a caucus. In a boost for Obama, Democrat Dennis Kucinich asked his supporters to support Obama if he doesn't meet the cutoff point for voting in the caucuses.

As they campaigned in Iowa, all but one candidate, Romney, shunned the negativity that spiked in recent weeks.

Obama, Clinton and Edwards played nice. Huckabee made good on a promise to clean up his act, the day after he held a news conference to say he wouldn't run a critical ad against Romney — but then showed it to a room full of reporters and cameramen.

"It does remind you a bit of a person who stands up and says 'I'm not going to call my opponent any names, but here are the names I'd call him if I were going to call him names,'" Romney told reporters in Johnston.

With two days left in the campaign, Romney continued his ads against Huckabee. He also assailed Huckabee's defense of his own failure to read the National Intelligence Estimate on Iran last month.

"President Bush didn't read it for four years; I don't know why I should read it in four hours," Huckabee said in an interview published Monday in the Mason City Globe Gazette.

Romney seized on the comment: "I'm not sure whether Governor Huckabee meant the attack as a joke, but this is not a time to be mocking our president, and it was I think in bad taste."

A multimillionaire, Romney also indicated that he had funneled more of his personal fortune into his campaign, but wouldn't say how much. He had contributed $17 million through September.

For the most part, candidates spent New Year's Day trying to energize supporters.

DEATH NOTICES

CERVANTES — Antonio E. Cervantes, 63, of Monessen, on Monday, Dec. 31. Robert A. Billick Funeral Home Inc., Monessen.*

JARVIS — John N. Jarvis, 84, of Forward Township, on Tuesday, Jan. 1. Ferguson Funeral Home and Crematory Inc., Belle Vernon.*

SULLENBERGER — Edward L. Sullenberger Sr., 56, of Fallowfield Township, on Monday, Dec. 31. Schrock-Hogan Funeral Home and Cremation Services Inc., Charleroi.*

WINDOM — Odell Windom, 81, of Monessen, on Sunday, Dec. 30. Beverly Draper Funeral Home, Monessen.*

*** See death notice**

Antonio E. Cervantes
Monessen

Antonio Edward "Tony" Cervantes, 63, of Monessen, was called by the Lord and the Angels in Heaven on Monday, Dec. 31, 2007, in his home after a courageous battle with cancer. He was born March 1, 1944, in Monessen, a son of the late Jesus and Mary Cervantes. He was a lifelong citizen of Monessen. Mr. Cervantes, who worked in the construction field, retired from Corning Glass in 1989. He is survived by his wife of 44 years, Joyce Schroyer Cervantes, formerly of Fayette City; two sons, Joseph Cervantes and wife, Donna, of Jacksonville, Fla., and John "Jack" Cervantes and wife, Denise, of Monessen; two daughters, Lisa Latkanich and husband, Michael, of Rostraver Township, and Angela Cervantes, of Jacksonville; three sisters, Patricia Neil, Margarita Russell and husband, Jeff, and Mary Cervantes; grandchildren, Jessica, Joe and Monasita Cervantes, Nicole and Toni Lynn Cervantes, and Michael and Marcus Latkanich; two step-grandchildren, Stephanie and Dillion Lankford; and numerous nieces, nephews and other family members, all of whom have been part of this thoughts and prayers. Friends will be received at the ROBERT A. BILLICK FUNERAL HOME INC., Grand Boulevard and Marion Avenue, Monessen (724-684-3700), on Thursday from 7 to 9 p.m. and Friday from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. Funeral services will be held Saturday, Jan. 5, at 10 a.m. in the funeral home with the Rev. Christine Ingold officiating. Interment will follow in Belle Vernon Cemetery. Tony will be deeply missed by family and friends.

Family and friends are invited to sign the online guest book at www.valleyindependent.com.

Edward L. Sullenberger Sr.
Fallowfield Township

Edward L Sullenberger Sr., 56, of Fallowfield Township, went to be with the Lord on Monday, Dec. 31, 2007, after a courageous battle with cancer. He was born July 23, 1951, in North Charleroi, a son of Audrey Mackey Muia and husband, Eugene, of Webster, and the late Edward Sullenberger. Ed was a graduate of Belle Vernon Area High School with the Class of 1970. He was a member of Mingo Presbyterian Church, where he sang with the church choir. Ed was a junior fireman with the Webster Fire Department and a former fireman with the Charleroi Fire Department. He also was a member of Mon Valley ARC, where he coached basketball, a former member of the Charleroi Midget Football League, and he was a football coach with the Charleroi Midget League and the Charleroi Area Middle School. Ed was a baseball umpire with the Charleroi and Fallowfield Township Softball and Baseball Association. He was an avid hunter and fisherman and was a member of the Sinnemahoning Sportsmen's Club. Ed was employed by Lifesteps as a residential companion for mentally challenged adults and part-time by Tom Clark Motor Sports. In addition to his mother, he is survived by his wife, Donna Ganassi Sullenberger; one daughter Lisa Kearns and husband, Bill, of Charleroi; three sons, Edward L. Sullenberger Jr., of West Newton (Turkeytown), Jason Sullenberger, of Monessen, and Jared Sullenberger, at home; his sister, Charlotte "Cookie" Newstrom and husband, Peter, of Webster (Rostraver Township); two nieces and one nephew, Sherri Cappalonga, Shirley Green and Peter Lee Newstrom and their families; a special uncle and cousin, Uncle Albert and cousin Albert; his closest friends, John, Amy, Laurie, Sandy, Harold, Emily and Randy; his maternal grandparents, Herbert and Lois Mackey, of Monessen; and his mother-in-law, Mabel Ganassi. Friends will be received Thursday and Friday from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. in the SCHROCK-HOGAN FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION SERVICES INC., (www.schrock-hogan.com), 226 Fallowfield Ave., Charleroi. Funeral services will be held Saturday, Jan. 5, at 11 a.m. in Mingo Presbyterian Church. Family and friends attending the funeral services are asked to go directly to the church. Interment will be in Mingo Presbyterian Church Cemetery.

Family and friends are invited to sign the online guest book at www.valleyindependent.com.

Odell Windom
Monessen

Odell Windom, 81, of Monessen, departed this life on Sunday, Dec. 30, 2007, at her home with her family by her side. Born April 23, 1926, in Gainesville, she was a daughter of the late Herbert and Wilda Windom. She leaves to cherish her memory one daughter, the Rev. Wilda (Thomas) Farmer, of Wilmerding; three sisters, Betty Jenkins, of Chicago, Ill., Alice (Elvis) Freeman, of Passaic, N.J., and Margaret "Dottie" Scott-Arnett, of Brownsville; six grandchildren, Norronda (Edgar) Jones, Jacquelyn Windom-Gunnell, with whom she lived, both of Monessen, Aaron (LaToya) Windom, of Houston, Texas, Jacqueline Williams, of New Orleans, La., Thomas Farmer Jr., of Los Angeles, Calif., and Pamela Farmer, of Pittsburgh; seven great-grandchildren, and six great-great-grandchildren; three nephews, whom she helped raised, William Scott and Nathaniel and Charles Mosley; and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. She was preceded in death by six brothers, Wilmer, Herbert, James, John, Floyd and Edward Windom; three sisters, Marie Gates, Earstie Keith and Bernice Windom; and one granddaughter, LaTanya Marie Windom. Family and friends will be received Thursday from 7 to 9 p.m. in the BEVERLY C. DRAPER FUNERAL HOME INC., 608 Sixth St., Monessen (724-684-6242). Funeral services will be held Friday, Jan. 4, at 11 a.m. in Union-Fellowship Baptist Church, 916 Knox Ave., Monessen, with the Rev. Ricardo V. Hall officiating. Interment will take place in Belle Vernon Cemetery.

Family and friends are invited to sign the online guest book at www.valleyindependent.com.

John N. Jarvis
Forward Township

John N. Jarvis, 84, of Forward Township, died Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2008, in Mt. Vernon Health Care Center. A son of the late Milton and Ethel Hunter Jarvis, he was born in Forward Township on June 30, 1923. John was a lifelong resident of Forward Township, worked at the former Donora Works and retired from the former National Tube Works of U.S. Steel in Christy Park, where he was a machinist. He also served four years in the Merchant Marines during World War II. Survivors include his wife, Alma Goettel Jarvis, whom he married in 1947; one daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Mark Frederick, of Belle Vernon; two sons and one daughter-in-law, Thomas Jarvis and John N. and Rhonda Jarvis, all of Forward Township; one sister, Lillian Kline, of Pittsburgh; two brothers, Thomas Jarvis, of Addison, and Milton Jarvis, of Forward Township; seven grandchildren, Thomas Jarvis and Milton Thomas Jarvis, both of Charleroi, Billie Jo Jarvis, of Pittsburgh, John Jarvis, of Forward Township, Ray Frederick, of Belle Vernon, Pat Frederick, of Monessen, and Mike Frederick, of Belle Vernon; and four great-grandchildren. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by one sister, Vera Slowaitis; one brother, Kenneth Jarvis; and one daughter-in-law, Margaret Jarvis. There will be no public visitation or services. The FERGUSON FUNERAL HOME and CREMATORY INC., 700 Broad Ave., Belle Vernon (724-929-5300), www.fergusonfuneralhome-andcrematory.com, handled arrangements. If friends wish, memorial contributions may be made to: Three Rivers Hospice, 2500 Mosside Blvd., Monroeville, Pa. 15146.

Family and friends are invited to sign the online guest book at www.valleyindependent.com.

POLICE LOG

Monessen

■ Patrick Wilson, 40, of 323 Oneida St., Monessen, was picked up on an active bench warrant 6:10 a.m. Tuesday on Third Street and was transported to the Westmoreland County Jail, police said.

■ A 14-year-old female was charged with underage drinking 1:44 a.m. Tuesday after she was discovered highly intoxicated on Knox Avenue, police said.

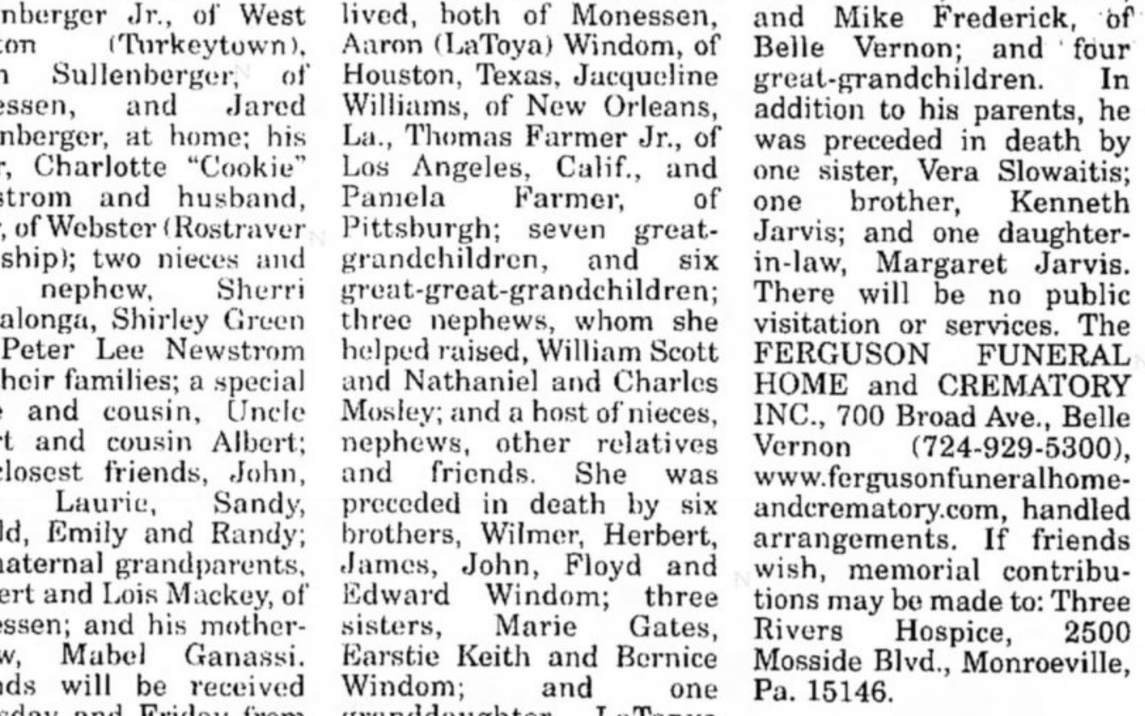
■ Kenneth Mosco Jr., 29, of 110 Knox Ave., Monessen, was charged with disorderly conduct 9:10 p.m. Monday as a result of an incident that took place at Eastgate Exxon, police said.

■ Margaret Ross, 24, of 315 First St., Donora, was charged with DUI 5 a.m. Tuesday at Eastgate Exxon, police said.

Southwest Regional

■ Mark Edward Seman, 38, of 336 Main St., Belle Vernon, was charged with simple assault domestic violence as a result of an incident that took place 1:40 a.m. today at his home, police said.

■ Robert James Luckey, 29, of 1002 Upper Meadow Ave., Charleroi, was charged with DUI 1:50 a.m. Sunday at Main and First streets in Belle Vernon, police said.



Vehicles driven by Nell Warholic, 87, of 304 Washington St., Bentleyville, pictured at right, and Patricia Coyle, 58, of 21 Yankosky Road, Fallowfield Township, collided 3 p.m. Monday at intersection of Coyle Curtin Road and the Mon/Fayette Expressway southbound off ramp. Warholic was transported to Mon Valley Hospital, where she was transported and later released. Fallowfield Township Volunteer Fire Company, Mon Valley Emergency Medical Services, Fallowfield Township Police, and Carroll Township Police responded.

Wayne Ray/ For The Valley Independent

Family of Theodore G. Steward

We wish to extend our heartfelt appreciation for the many acts of kindness, messages of sympathy, spiritual comfort, beautiful floral offferings and masses received from our many friends and neighbors during our recent bereavement, the death of our beloved husband and father, Theodore G. Steward. We especially wish to thank the pallbearers and Father Bill Ilgenfritz for his comforting words and all those who helped in any way to lessen our sorrow.

The Steward, Harris & Hunt Families

Fallowfield Township police issue annual report

Fallowfield Township police issued the following report for 2007:

Miscellaneous calls, 206; alarm activations, 103; ambulance assists, 158; animal calls, 18; accidents, 98; assists motorists, 42; assist other agencies, 144; be on the lookout for calls, 114; check well being, 14; civil problem, 62; deaths, one; deer struck, seven; disabled vehicles, 76; disturbances, 43; DUI, 15; dog calls, 17; domestics, 52; escorts, three; fire calls, 46; juvenile problems, 28; missing persons, three; neighbor problems, 10; prowler calls, 11; public utility calls, nine; road hazards, 77; stolen vehicles, 15; suspicious persons, 56; suspicious vehicles, 53; endangering children, one; mental health problems, 14; vacationers, 11; assaults, 12; burglaries, 28; criminal mischief, 43; disorderly conduct, 27; arson, one; firearms violations, 10; drug act violations, 10; thefts, 94; robbery, one; scattering rubbish, three; sex crimes, four; trespassing, 27; liquor law violations, five; public nuisances, five; harassment, 52; traffic stops, 227; school detail, 25; investigations, 22; traffic arrests, 135; criminal arrests, 104; warnings issued, 135; ordinance warnings, 36; and ordinance arrests, 34.

Total calls handled, 2,238.

NEWS

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Wednesday, Jan. 2, the second day of 2008. There are 364 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight:

On Jan. 2, 1900, Secretary of State John Hay announced the "Open Door Policy" to facilitate trade with China.

On this date:

■ In 1492, Muhammad XI, the sultan of Granada, the last Arab stronghold in Spain, surrendered to Spanish forces.

■ In 1788, Georgia became the fourth state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

■ In 1929, the United States and Canada reached agreement on joint action to preserve Niagara Falls.

■ In 1942, the Philippine capital of Manila was captured by Japanese forces during World War II.

■ In 1960, Sen. John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts announced his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination.

■ In 1965, the New York Jets signed University of Alabama quarterback Joe Namath to a contract reportedly worth $427,000.

■ In 1974, President Nixon signed legislation requiring states to limit highway speeds to 55 miles per hour (federal speed limits were abolished in 1995).

■ In 2006, a methane gas explosion at the Sago Mine in West Virginia, claimed the lives of 12 miners, but one miner, Randal McCloy Jr., was eventually rescued.

■ **Ten years ago**: The defense in the Terry Nichols federal trial rested its case in the penalty phase after calling nine witnesses who pleaded for his life. (Nichols was sentenced to life in prison on federal convictions of conspiracy and involuntary manslaughter involving the deaths of eight federal law enforcement officers. He was later convicted of state murder charges in Oklahoma, and sentenced to 161 consecutive life sentences.)

■ **Five years ago**: President Bush, seeking to counter Democratic criticisms that his economic policies favored the rich, said the economic-stimulus plan he was going to unveil the following week would focus on jobs and the unemployed. Sydney Omarr, astrologer to the stars, died in Santa Monica, Calif., at age 76.

■ **One year ago**: The state funeral for former President Ford began with an elaborate service at Washington National Cathedral, then moved to Grand Rapids, Mich. New York City commuter Wesley Autrey Sr. saved a 19-year-old student who had fallen onto subway tracks by leaping down and pulling the teen and himself into the trough between the tracks as a train passed over them.

Associated Press

Relatives of bombing victim Naed Touma weep as they watch his coffin leave a Christian church today in Baghdad.

Iraq expecting talks with Iran on waterway

Tuesday's attack was deadliest in Baghdad since August.

By ELENA BECATOROS
Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD — Relatives wept as the remains of victims from a suicide bombing at a funeral were placed into coffins today, while police increased the attack's death toll by four to 36 killed in Baghdad's deadliest attack since August.

Tuesday's attack was a reminder of the dangers that persist despite the recent decline in violence in Iraq and of the peril for mass gatherings in a country where the bereaved often find themselves targets.

The bomber detonated his explosives amid men gathered in the capital's eastern Zayouna neighborhood for the funeral of Nabil Hussein Jassim, a retired Iraqi Army officer killed last week in a car bombing blamed on al-Qaida in Iraq that had killed 14 people.

"At the end of a three-day mourning period, a terrorist blew up himself in the mourning tent, leaving bodies scattered," one of the wounded men, who gave his name only as Abu Hasanain, told AP Television from his bed in al-Kindi Teaching Hospital today.

The funeral bombing was the deadliest attack in the capital since Aug. 1, when a suicide bomber detonated a fuel truck near a gas station, killing 50 people and wounding 60.

In the same Baghdad neighborhood of Zayouna, a roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded six people today — three police and three civilians, a police officer said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release information.

In Baqouba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonated his explosives near a hospital in the center of town, killing four people and wounding 23, an official at the hospital's morgue said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to media.

To the north in Mosul, 225 miles northwest of Baghdad, police said they detained a senior local al-Qaida fighter in a joint operation with police from nearby Tikrit on Tuesday evening.

The suspect, Adnan Khalil al-Faraj, is believed to be a senior al-Qaida military commander for Mosul and Tikrit, said Brig. Abdul Kareem al-Jubori of Nineveh province's police.

Despite continuing attacks, there has been a noticeable decrease in violence across the country compared to late 2006 and early 2007, when many feared Iraq was heading toward civil war. The U.S. military says violence has fallen by 60 percent since June.

The drop has been attributed to a combination of the work of predominantly Sunni armed groups who turned against al-Qaida and are now backed by the U.S. military; a freeze on the activity of the Mahdi Army militia declared by its leader, radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr; and an extra 30,000 U.S. troops sent into the Baghdad area.

The U.S.-backed armed groups — known as Awakening Councils — are paid salaries of $300 to protect their neighborhoods, and often work with Iraqi security forces or the U.S. military to clear their areas of insurgents or militias.

But the members also have become targets. On Monday, a suicide bomber targeting members of the U.S.-funded movement killed 12 people in Tarmiyah, just north of Baghdad.

Separately, an adviser to Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said today that negotiations are expected to begin in mid-January between Iraq and Iran over the cleaning up the strategic Shatt el-Arab waterway.

THE WORLD BRIEFLY

Kenyan violence kills at least 275

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — International pressure mounted today on Kenya's leaders to bring an end to postelection violence that has shaken the country and killed more than 275 people, including dozens burned alive as they sought refuge in a church.

The killing of up to 50 ethnic Kikuyus Tuesday as they sheltered in a church in the Rift Valley city of Eldoret fueled fears that ethnic conflicts were deepening in what has been one of Africa's most stable democracies.

The U.N. cited Kenyan police as saying 70,000 people had been displaced in five days of violence. Around 5,400 people also have fled to neighboring Uganda, said Musa Ecweru, that country's disaster preparedness minister. Several hundred people also have fled to Tanzania, officials there said.

Much of Nairobi was quiet and deserted Wednesday, though clashes continued in the city's giant Mathare slum.

Livingstone Wesonga said his wife lost their fifth child on Tuesday night after complications during the delivery. Vigilante groups roaming the streets kept the family penned in their home and no ambulance or doctor was willing or able to come.

Asked why he had not fled with his family, Wesonga said: "Where can I take them? Every place is not safe because this thing is spreading."

Government spokesman Alfred Mutua downplayed the violence, saying it had only affected about 3 percent of the country's 34 million people. "Kenya is not burning and not at the throes of any division," he said.

Mutua said the security forces had arrested 500 people since skirmishes began.

President Mwai Kibaki was inaugurated for a second term Sunday, but his rival Raila Odinga says the poll was rigged.

Violence continues in Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Roadside bombs and military operations in Afghanistan killed 19 people, including 14 Taliban fighters, as the record violence that Afghanistan saw in 2007 continued into the new year, officials said today.

Afghan and foreign troops killed eight suspected Taliban fighters Tuesday in southern Afghanistan, while a roadside bomb in the east's Khost province killed two Afghan security guards working for a U.S. military base, an Afghan Defense Ministry statement said.

Five other militants were killed in separate incidents when roadside bombs they were planting exploded prematurely, the ministry said. Taliban militants killed an Afghan army officer and wounded another in Helmand province's Sarkono area, it said.

Police in Khost killed a would-be suicide bomber who was carrying hand grenades as he tried to enter a police checkpoint Tuesday.

'PENNSYLVANIA CASH 5'

'Cash 5' jackpot at least $200,000

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Today's "Pennsylvania Cash 5" jackpot will be worth at least $200,000 because no player matched the five winning numbers drawn in Tuesday's game.

Lottery officials said 132 players matched four numbers and won $194 each; 3,846 players matched three numbers and won $7 each; and 36,208 players matched two numbers and won $1 each.

The Valley Independent LOTTERY RESULTS

PENNSYLVANIA DAILY NUMBERS — TUESDAY, JAN. 1

DAY PICK 3:	2-2-3
NIGHT PICK 3:	0-9-6
DAY PICK BIG 4:	4-4-2-9
NIGHT PICK BIG 4:	3-8-6-2
TREASURE HUNT:	5-10-14-16-29
CASH 5:	11-12-17-22-26
MATCH 6:	7-10-19-32-39-44

OHIO DAILY NUMBERS — TUESDAY, JAN. 1

DAY PICK 3:	4-1-8
NIGHT PICK 3:	6-0-3
DAY PICK 4:	5-3-7-7
NIGHT PICK 4:	2-9-2-0
ROLLING CASH 5:	13-20-21-23-29

WEST VIRGINIA DAILY NUMBERS — TUESDAY, JAN. 1

DAILY 3:	9-7-9
DAILY 4:	5-9-7-8
CASH 25:	5-6-11-13-17-25

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of winning numbers and prize payouts. In the event of a discrepancy, the official and certified files maintained by the Pennsylvania Lottery's Security Office shall prevail.

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OUR OPINION

Story in Pakistan keeps changing

THIS JUST IN! The Pakistani government today yet again revised the cause of death for former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

It was neither a bullet, nor shrapnel from a suicide bomber blast, nor a sunroof latch that caused Ms. Bhutto's death Thursday last.

No, it was a banana peel left on the floor of the SUV in which she was departing a political rally. She slipped on the peel, fell onto it and suffocated, an Interior Ministry spokesman said.

The new official cause of death — a potassium overdose.

Yeah, that's the ticket.

Never mind that doctors and family members who viewed the body say there were head and neck wounds that resembled those caused by bullets.

Never mind that video footage of the assassination shows bullets being fired, Bhutto's head snapping to one side, her collapsing into the vehicle and the bomb blast after that.

Never mind that outside ballistics experts — viewing a number of videos and matching them with sound recordings — think it's pretty clear Bhutto was shot.

The point here is if Pakistan, our "ally," expects the continued support of the United States, it has to get its stories straight; this old "Saturday Night Live" skit doesn't cut it.

If we can't have even a modicum of confidence in how our opposition horse in the Pakistani race met her demise, how can we have any confidence that Pakistan's goals and those of the United States are the same?

ANOTHER VIEW

State College Centre Daily Times on Bill DeWeese:

House Majority Leader H. William DeWeese, D-Greene, is on a statewide tour, meeting with newspaper editorial boards to talk about the latest capital scandal: paying bonuses from the state treasury to legislative staffers for political work.

DeWeese, for whom the phrase "Harrisburg insider" could have been coined, claims he had no knowledge of the $1.85 million or so paid to Democratic staff members for campaign-related activities. Members of his own staff whom DeWeese jettisoned as though they were Watergate burglars misled him, he insists.

Tim Potts, who used to work for DeWeese but now directs the nonpartisan, reform-advocacy group Democracy Rising PA, must be smiling. A previous scandal, the legislative pay raise, had DeWeese's fingerprints all over it, Potts told the Centre Daily Times editorial board.

DeWeese hasn't requested a meeting with us, only with the important metro dailies thus far. If he does, however, we'll ask Potts to sit in. We love to bring joy and uncontrollable laughter especially during the holiday season, to people who are toiling away for a good cause.

But maybe DeWeese didn't know about the taxpayer-funded bonuses until they were rudely brought to his attention by state Attorney Tom Corbett's investigation, even though the note that accompanied them went out on his own letterhead — talk about inconvenient truths.

Maybe he didn't really want the salary-increase vote to take place after midnight without debate, and the demotion from committee-leadership positions of Democrats who opposed it was simply a series of coincidences. ...

The General Assembly is oversized, its members overpaid and outrageously overperked. Even in this, the post-pay-raise Age of Reform, with Democracy Rising and similar groups on the ascendancy, the system, intractable and entrenched, will change only as little as the participants can get away with.

And as long as they have safe seats, as long as House and Senate districts are drawn by politicians, for politicians — a safe Republican district here in exchange for a safe Democratic one there — they will get away with everything they can.

How to reach us

The Valley Independent welcomes the input of our readers. Letters, e-mails and faxes must be signed and should include an address and daytime telephone number so the content of the message can be verified. (Phone numbers will not be published.)

Send your comments:

— By mail to Your Opinion, *The Valley Independent*, Eastgate 19, Monessen, Pa. 15062.

— By e-mail to valleyletters@tribweb.com

— By fax to (724) 684-2603.

All messages are subject to editing for clarification, brevity and libel. Messages should be kept to 300 words. (No poetry, please.) While letters usually are published in order of submission, those concerning timely local issues are given priority.

Feel any better?

Charley **REESE**

When Samuel Goldwyn led MGM studios, he reportedly told one of his producers, "If you want to send a message, use Western Union."

That's all the explanation that is necessary for the poor box-office showing of a number of Iraq War films. When people go to the movies, they want to be entertained, not depressed or lectured. Goldwyn understood that; many in Hollywood today do not.

It's not uncommon these days for a film to enthrall the critics while failing to attract audiences. It's not uncommon for films that the critics disdain to make a lot of money. The true function of the movies is the same as that of the circus — to thrill us or make us laugh.

After all, those who like garbage can go to the local dump and look at it for free. Those who are fascinated by psychotics and neurotics can volunteer at a mental hospital. Those who want to see stories about bad people competing with other bad people can follow American politics.

The fictional hero, a concept that has been cheapened by airheads on television claiming that every person who wears a uniform is a hero, serves a useful purpose. Human life can be difficult and frustrating. We don't always attain our goals. We sometimes find ourselves in unpleasant situations.

To see a story about a heroic figure, even if fictional, inspires us. It reminds us that humans can be winners, that evil can be overcome. Humans need role models, and failures, cowards, psychopaths, killers and criminals don't make good role models.

The author Ayn Rand believed that all works of art were a reflection of the soul of the creator. On a television show, the host asked her, "Well, don't you think people of whom you disapprove have the right to produce their own works?" She replied, "Of course they have the right, but if I had a garbage can for a soul, I wouldn't want to put it on public display."

A great many people in the so-called creative-arts world today do have garbage cans for souls, and they do put them on public display. In most cases, the public demonstrates better tastes than the critics, the museum directors and the grant-givers. Who but an idiot would consider a crucifix in a bottle of urine as art?

Art is a form of communication, and therefore if it is neither intelligible nor beautiful, it is not art. The political concept of egalitarianism doesn't apply. One painting is not as good as any other, and the same rule applies to movie scripts, plays, performances, sculpture, photography and novels. Great art has always been the difficult and the exceptional. It is never the commonplace.

Movies, being a collaborative form of art, are especially difficult. The contributions of so many people have to mesh perfectly. It doesn't occur all that often, despite the best efforts. To see the magic created when everything does mesh, check out the old Elia Kazan film "On the Waterfront."

A good test of any art is, do you feel better after experiencing it? If not, why bother? It's quicker to hit your thumb with a hammer than to spend good money and an hour and a half of your life watching a message picture that tells you the world is ugly and hopeless.

The world is not ugly and hopeless. It is beautiful, and life is a grand experience. There is so much beauty to enjoy, and hope never dies if nourished by courage.

Happiness is often more of a choice than a circumstance. The world is as it is, but it is our reaction to that world that determines whether we are sad or happy.

Write to Charley Reese at P.O. Box 2446, Orlando, FL 32802.

Paying Islam for our Western guilt

Diana **WEST**

Christmas came early to the Palestinian Authority when the "international community" decided not only to meet PA President Mahmoud Abbas' request for $5.6 billion in aid, but to throw in almost $2 billion more. Why? Did the PA end its terrorist ways? Stop state-sanctioned incitement against Israel and the West? Change Fatah's charter (forget about Hamas) calling for Israel's destruction?

Alas, no, no and no. We are heaping riches on the PA for other reasons, one of which I discuss below.

But first, a digression: Christmas, obviously, doesn't come to the PA, even if Western billions do. Despite a tiny (and decreasing) number of Christians, the PA is a land of Islam — Dar al-Islam. That makes Israel, the object of the PA's destructive animus, Dar al-Harb, land of war, right?

Right. But not according to the PC script of the "international community." We never, ever discuss the Islamic context of "Arab-Israeli" conflicts. But how else can we hope to understand them? Jihad ideology inspires the Arab struggle against Israel. It also explains it. As the only non-Muslim country amid Middle Eastern Dar-al Islam, as the only "dhimmi" nation to reclaim its land once conquered by Islam, Israel's very existence is a religious offense to the "umma," or Islamic community. In this same context, what we call "foreign aid" to the PA may be understood as a form of "jizya," the protection money paid to Muslims by non-Muslims.

But the non-Muslim world prefers not to think like that. We avert our collective eye from the goals of jihad, from the history and teachings of Islam. Instead, we see ourselves as villains — Israel for its existence, and Israel's supporters for, well, their support for Israel's existence.

In so doing, we create a sinkhole of Western guilt and responsibility for suffering Muslims, in this case in the PA. They suffer not as a consequence of their religio-political bloodlust to destroy the Jews in Israel (the nearest infidels), but because there are Jews in Israel. In other words, it's everyone else's fault but their own. Islam — particularly, jihadist ideology — is not to blame. Throw more money down the hole.

Of course, this works only until we stop misreading such ideology. And how long will that take? Probably forever — so long as we continue leaning on the same authorities who got us into this mental mess in the first place.

As it happens, I began the year thinking about this subject — exonerating Islam — while discussing a PBS documentary on anti-Semitism in the Islamic world. The show's conclusion: What isn't Israel's fault is that of the West.

Well, you can't expect much more from (lefty) PBS. What was startling about the message, however, was one of the messenger's: none other than the eminent historian Bernard Lewis. He declared that anti-Semitism didn't even exist in the Middle East until European Christian colonizers brought it. You don't need to be a scholar of Lewis' stature to know that European colonization of the Middle East didn't begin until some 1,100 years after Islamic anti-Semitism got going in the Koran, the canonical commentaries on the Koran, and in a long and painful (for Christians also) historical record.

Because Lewis is probably the most influential voice on Islam in our time — particularly for the U.S. foreign policy establishment — his pronouncements are more than significant. Right or, in this case, wrong, they become the conventional wisdom, or reinforce it.

This comes to mind because Lewis has done it again — holding Europe responsible for unpalatable traditions of Islam. Writing at The American Thinker blog, Andrew Bostom, author of "The Legacy of Jihad" and, forthcoming, "The Legacy of Islamic Anti-Semitism," quotes a speech in which Lewis said: "The authoritarianism present in the Middle East region is not part of the Arab and Muslim traditions, but it has been imported from Europe."

Bostom goes on to cite copious chapter and verse — including earlier writings by Lewis himself — demonstrating that "the Arab and Muslim tradition" needed no lessons from Europe on authoritarianism.

Why is Lewis making statements contradicted by the historical record? If European Christendom truly is the source of Islamic evil — e.g., anti-Semitism and authoritarianism — Islam is let off the hook, and blame falls on the West. Whether that is Lewis' point, it is certainly Lewis' effect.

And it is certainly the conventional wisdom. Not very wise, though, when it helps feed the kind of guilt assuaged only by giving billions of dollars to murderers and thieves.

Diana West is a columnist for The Washington Times. She can be contacted via dianawest@verizon.net.

NEWS

Joe Appel/For The Valley Independent

Blaze Katich, right, has a drink with his buddy, Mike McManama, Tuesday at Fat Head's on East Carson Street in Pittsburgh's South Side. Katich, a former city bar owner who works in construction in Virginia, said Allegheny County keeps "finding ways to chase businesses out of town."

Patrons gripe about drink tax but pony up as they belly up

Ten percent tax on all alcoholic drinks sold at bars and restaurants kicked in Tuesday.

By MARK HOUSER
For The Valley Independent
mhouser@tribweb.com

Despite her father being a beneficiary of a new tax she has to pay, Tanya Szuch expressed more resignation than support for the drink tax that took effect at 6 a.m. Tuesday.

"We're just going to pay it, so there's not much you can do about it," said Szuch, 31, of Brookline, whose father is a bus mechanic for Port Authority of Allegheny County.

The 10 percent tax on all alcoholic drinks sold at bars and restaurants, which county Chief Executive Dan Onorato supported and signed into law last month, was devised to plug a $30 million budget gap and fund the cash-strapped Port Authority.

But neither Szuch nor her husband was willing to give the tax the benefit of the doubt as they had a pint at Smokin' Joe's Saloon in the South Side yesterday.

"If the tax would get us a good public transit system like San Diego or Los Angeles, you could tax me 20 percent on a beer and I would pay it. I would even hold a sign up for it. But we have the worst public transportation," said Damian Szuch, 33.

Tax day on drinks came the same day the transit agency raised base fares by 25 cents to $2 in most of the city and by 35 cents on suburban trips. Car rental agencies began collecting a $2-per-day tax for the county, also to fill the transit shortfall.

A county judge denied a last-minute request last week to halt the drink tax, despite vocal opposition from restaurant and bar owners.

Smokin' Joe's gave up on its own method of protest. Patrons initially were to receive receipts separately itemizing an "Onorato Tax," but managers said they could not make the cash registers do so properly. Instead, receipts were printed with the notice: "Transit tax included in drink price."

A few blocks up East Carson Street at Fat Head's, a sign on the door notified customers that owner Glenn Benigni is so upset about the "unfair" levy, he's covering it out of his own pocket for the first week of January to spare patrons the expense.

"They keep finding new ways to chase businesses out of town," said Blaze Katich, 44, who was drinking and eating at Fat Head's.

The former Pittsburgh bar owner works in construction in northern Virginia and was in town visiting friends.

"If they want to tax us, tax everybody, not just the people who go into bars," said Fat Head's manager Gary Pfeil. "People who go to bars aren't the only people riding PAT buses."

Lucy Andrews, 26, of Mt. Lebanon said the impact on her and her husband's socializing will be negligible.

"I guess in the grand scheme of things it doesn't sound like that much to me. You never, of course, want to spend more money. But I don't think it's going to affect us," Andrews said.

Politics (FROM PAGE THREE)

works, 27 in administrative services, 23 from row offices, 19 in human services and 18 from courts, according to county Manager Jim Flynn.

"I think what we saw in the first four years was the ability of a leader to work in a bipartisan fashion," said County Councilman Jim Burn, D-Millvale, who praised Onorato for his response to local flooding triggered in 2004 by Hurricane Ivan. "He didn't shy away from tough problems."

Burn chairs the Democratic Party in the county.

County Councilman Vince Gastgeb, a Bethel Park Republican, said Onorato should work harder in his second term to involve his local legislative counterparts in problem-solving. Gastgeb said Onorato didn't discuss the drink tax or a $2-a-day rental car tax with council members until after he apparently had made up his mind about the taxes.

"I don't think that's a Democratic or Republican thing. I think it's an inclusion thing," Gastgeb said. "I think we need to be involved in the process from beginning to end."

Roddey, who heads the county GOP, disagrees with Onorato's handling of property assessments.

"He's sort of plotted his (course) on not having property taxes increase," Roddey said. "It triggers the need for increasing taxes in other areas."

Analysts speculate that Onorato would be a strong candidate to succeed Gov. Ed Rendell in 2011. Another possible contender is Auditor General Jack Wagner, a former Pittsburgh councilman and state senator who did not return calls seeking comment for this article.

Onorato's campaign aides are working to increase his name recognition elsewhere in the state.

"(Onorato) is one of a group of young, up-and-coming political leaders that Democrats, at least, are certainly aware of," said Chuck Ardo, Rendell's press secretary.

"Dan is very thoughtful and courageous and is willing to take political risks for what he believes is the right thing to do," Ardo added. "And it's very difficult not to respect that."

"He has energy, intellect and vision," said Glenn Mahone, a lawyer who has chaired the county Airport Authority board since 1999. "He understands a lot of the ... dynamics that drive the business community."

Onorato will not answer many questions about his plans, if any, for future office. But he talks about statewide issues when pressed.

"If I have any future ambition - and that's an eternity, three years from now -- that'll take care of itself," he said. "But I have a story to tell. If you've got a story to tell and you have a record to run on, and you want to do something further statewide ... that story will allow (you) to go around the state."

Strauss was impressed with some of Onorato's first-term accomplishments, such as laying off 500 county employees in 2004 to fix a $31 million budget deficit and his efforts to bring low-cost carriers to Pittsburgh as US Airways left more gates empty.

Strauss is unsure, though, whether Onorato deserves accolades for other headline-grabbing developments, such as the deal to build an Uptown arena that will keep the Penguins in Pittsburgh.

"I thought the mayor (of Pittsburgh) kept the Penguins. Who's getting credit here?" Strauss said.

"I think that the high points of what Dan has accomplished are a continuance of the fiscal prudence demonstrated under Jim Roddey."

No sign state plans to kill death penalty

Prosecutors around the state say they are working to have executions carried out.

By The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Although New Jersey recently abolished the death penalty, no such move appears likely in Pennsylvania, where the state Supreme Court affirmed the sentence in several year-end rulings.

Prosecutors around the state say they are working to have the executions — which remain rare — carried out.

"I don't think the death penalty is going away in Pennsylvania," said Senior Deputy Attorney General Jonelle H. Eshbach.

Pennsylvania has 228 inmates on death row, the fourth-largest number in the country. But only three people have been executed since the death penalty was reinstated in 1978, and all three gave up their appeals.

The state's high court issued a flurry of rulings in recent days that affirmed four death sentences while ordering new hearings in two other cases, including that of George Banks, of Luzerne County.

Banks, 65, was convicted of a 1982 shooting rampage that killed 13 people, including five of his own children. He has been on death row since 1983, but the state Supreme Court ordered a new hearing to determine if he is mentally competent to be put to death.

The court also ordered a new hearing for Willie Cooper, of Philadelphia, due to what it called "egregious and bizarre" remarks made by his trial lawyer. The lawyer, seemingly damning his own client, said the Biblical reference to the term "an eye for an eye" referred only to someone who had killed a pregnant woman. Cooper was accused of just that.

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2007 brought business change

By CHRIS BUCKLEY
Staff Writer
cbuckley@tribweb.com

Business acquisitions and expansions to the proposal for new major retailers to build in the Mid-Mon Valley were among the stories that highlighted the business pages this past year.

Here is a look at what was making news on the local business scene in 2007.

January

There was no end in sight for the Lower Mon Project.

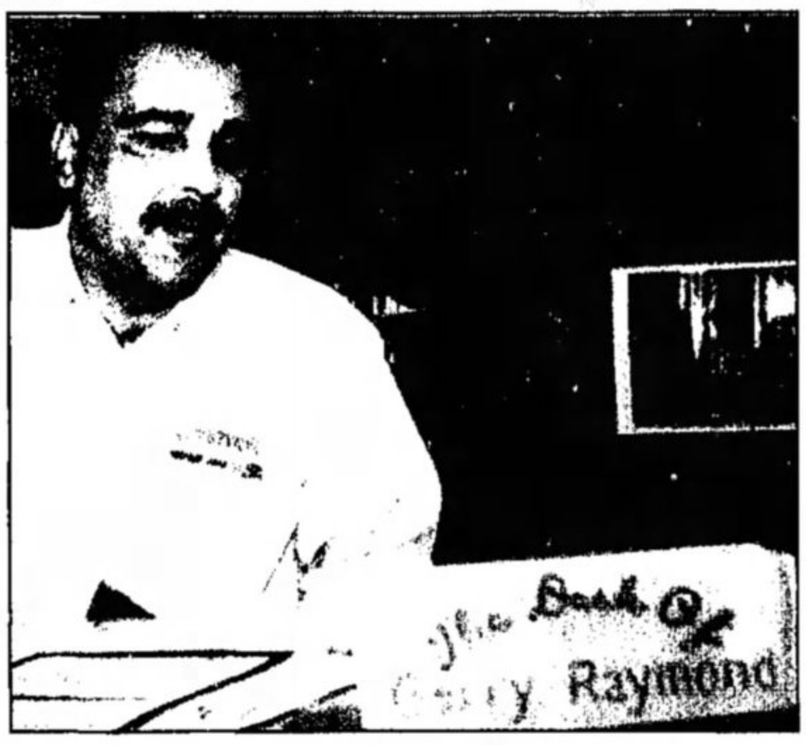
A new parking garage for employees at Jefferson Hospital opened up more parking for patients and their families.

Century 21 Frontier Reality announced the acquisition of Century M. Lucero and Associates Inc.

February

World Vision purchased and distributed clothing items that bore the now-incorrect phrase "Chicago Bears Super Bowl Bowl XLI Champs" to impoverished nations around the world.

California University provided Uniform Construction Code training at its Southpointe Center.



Jim Ference/The Valley Independent

Gerry Raymond sits at a makeshift office on the first floor of his auto dealership, the former Tom Clark dealership on Route 51 in Rostraver Township.

Vesely Brothers marked its 60-year affiliation with United Van Lines.

March

The Pittsburgh Penguins – who won back-to-back Stanley Cups in the early 1990s and flirted with another championship as recently as 2001 – were back as contenders. That raised interest in the sport, which is good news to businesses that count on its popularity.

John Naretto closed its dealership in Monessen.

Mon Valley Community Federal Credit Union expanded into the Monongahela area.

April

When Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onorato and 20 Pittsburgh-area leaders headed for China, they took their experiences of past trade missions overseas to a far more distant and complicated land.

Reading-based Boscov's Travel was considering providing service from Arnold Palmer Regional Airport to and from Orlando, Fla.

Renewal of a tax deferment program was expected to spur new development in Bentleyville.

May

Pam DeRose purchased the L.M. Frye Funeral Home Inc., in Monongahela.

The question, "Who are going to be the leaders of the future for Washington County?" was the impetus for formation of Leadership Washington County.

Situated in the Buena Vista section of Elizabeth Township, nestled between the Youghiogheny River and the Yough River Trail, was a business venture that was helping the community.

A proposed state law would have changed the way beer is sold in Pennsylvania.

June

At a reception celebrating its 50th anniversary, the Washington Industrial Development Corporation announced it has merged its board of directors with the Washington County Chamber of Commerce board.

Gerry Raymond purchased the former Tom Clark dealership on Route 51 in Rostraver Township.

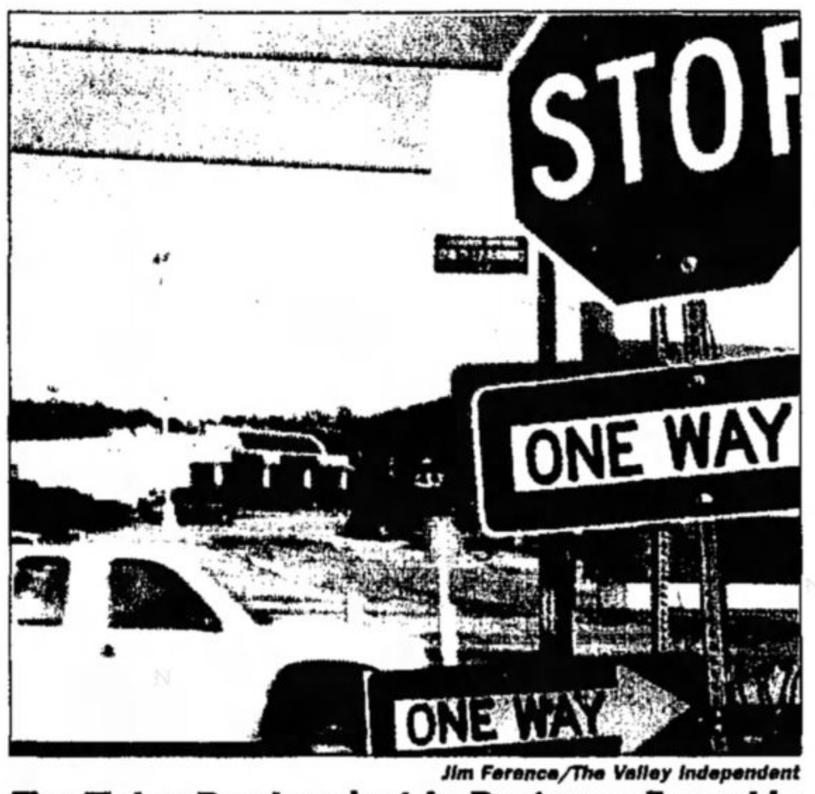
Bill's Golfland marked its 60th anniversary.

July

The state announced that with interest rates on millions of adjustable-rate mortgages predicted to "reset" or "recast" over the next two years, homeowners with these types of loans should be prepared for possibly significant increases in their monthly payments.

Separate proposals that would ban smoking in public places and enact a limited tax on alcohol would hurt Allegheny County businesses, but could aide those in other counties.

The Sarah Scaife Foundation awarded a grant of $125,000 to California University of Pennsylvania to support the University's Government Agency Coordination Office through September 30, 2008.



Jim Ference/The Valley Independent

The Finley Road project in Rostraver Township created a holiday headache for many shoppers and businesses.

August

Snyder of Berlin moved its distribution center in the Mid-Mon Valley into a 725,000-square-foot facility formerly owned by Supervalu.

High tech advancements being developed at Nokomis in Charleroi as well as California University of Pennsylvania received a boost when the House passed a $459.6 billion fiscal year 2008 Defense Appropriations Bill that includes funding for those local programs.

Chemco Systems LP, of Forward Township was proposing to pay to send 10 prospective welders to special training being conducted at Steel Center, located off Route 51 just south of Century III Mall.

Wal-Mart was considering a new store in West Brownsville.

September

Brownsville Tri County Hospital was arranging two meetings to provide direct information on the proposed reopening of the hospital.

William A. Bautz opened a funeral home in New Eagle.

Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation introduced a Web site.

October

Business hailed a decision by the Mon Valley Transit to extend service on Saturdays and late-night weekdays to the Rostraver Township shopping district along Route 201.

Mike Coury hoped to bring some night life to the Valley and do so in one of the most recognizable buildings in downtown Charleroi, the former Ducoeur's Furniture store.

California University of Pennsylvania's Government Agency Coordination Office was recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Center for Veterans Enterprise in Washington, D.C., for its efforts in assisting veteran-owned businesses throughout western Pennsylvania with federal government contracting and subcontracting.

Team Charleroi — formed with a vision to "provide economic opportunities and quality of life while preserving (Charleroi's) rich history" – met to organize its various committees.

Hartley King, owner of King's Family Restaurants, along with partners Nick Hrehovchak and Chris Whalen, signed a development agreement to operate locations for Sonic in the Pittsburgh area.

November

The Sears store, located in the former Hill's Department store site at Tri-County Plaza in Rostraver Township, was closing.

Shoppers hit the Web with retailers hoping the first few days of strong sales at the stores translate into a busy buying season online.

December

The U.S. switch to digital broadcast TV was viewed as a possible boon for local business.

Jennifer Melnick Carota, of Monessen, started the Web page The Gift Therapist, providing help for bargain shoppers.

The Finley Road project detours were a holiday headache for some Rostraver Township retailers.

Former steelworkers recalled when Pittsburgh steel plants were honored for supporting the war effort.

TRIB TOTAL MEDIA'S

Family, Inc.

by Jennifer Antkowiak

Wednesday, January 2, 2008

Q: I need to lose weight. I want to lose weight. This is my number one resolution and goal for 2008. I have a lot to lose. What tips do you have to help me keep on track?

A: I'm right there with you with a resolution to lose weight. According to quite a few polls I've seen, so are more than 60% of those who are making resolutions for 2008. The other biggest group of people want to incorporate more activity into their lives.

We all know that the ***BIG SECRET*** to losing weight is to eat less, and exercise more. If we all lived like that, the country wouldn't be in the shape it's in. So why don't we? Because it's not easy! We can point our fingers at a variety of perceived reasons why...I don't have time to exercise. I don't have enough money to buy healthy foods. I've tried to diet, and it just doesn't work. I've heard about too many diets and it's too confusing, I don't even know which one to try.

So what do we do? Usually, nothing; and our weight stays the same. Change takes work. When it comes to losing weight though, there are many big payoffs for our hard work.

Studies show that even a 5-10% loss of our total body weight does a lot to improve our overall health. By losing weight, we reduce our risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and even some forms of cancer. Experts say to have the best chance for success, we need to have realistic expectations, and set realistic goals. How much weight can you lose, and how quickly can you lose it? Research that shows that a 10% weight loss over six months is very attainable.

Realize that to achieve real, sustainable weight loss, you can't think of what you're about to do as a quick, one shot diet plan. Think of it as a new, healthier way of living.

You'll be eating healthier foods and portions, you'll be exercising more, you'll still be making (and maybe modifying) your favorite recipes. You'll still be eating in restaurants, but you'll be making healthier choices, and managing the portions yourself, by asking for a To Go box to pack half of a large serving into before you even take a bite.

Other tips proven to help people stick to their weight loss plans include:

- ***Surround yourself with supportive family members and friends. Don't be afraid to share the fact that you are trying to lose weight and that you might need some help along the way. Chances are good that those you love will be happy to be part of the process. Chances are also good that your healthier lifestyle will rub off on them!***
- ***Cut yourself some slack. I know that when we see TV shows where people are dropping 5, 10, even 15 pounds a week or more, it can be more than a little frustrating to work real hard, step on the scale at the end of the week, and see a one or two pound loss. Guess what though? Medical experts say that's exactly the kind of weight loss that leads to (delete a) healthy, long-term lifestyle changes. In fact, they recommend that people lose no more than 2 pounds a week. The environment and circumstances on those TV shows are just not on our radar. We're not going to quit our jobs, leave our families, and drop all of our other obligations to devote 24/7 to our resolutions. We can't. We are real people, and we need to accept that we'll be doing things our own way.***
- ***Celebrate your successes, as small as they may seem. If you walk an extra five minutes, put a star on your calendar. Do the same when you choose a piece of fruit instead of a candy bar when that 3:00 hunger hits.***

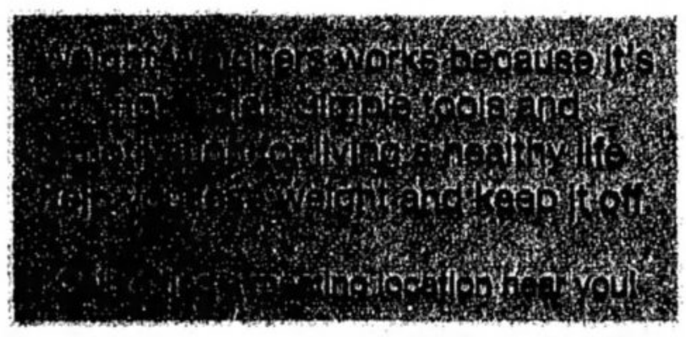
I've gotten a lot of information for this column from my friends at Weight Watchers, the world leader in providing weight management information. Weight Watchers is teaming up with me and Family, Inc. all through January to answer weight loss questions, provide motivation, inspiration, and some recipes to help us to kick start our resolutions.

I hope you'll look for Family, Inc. every Wednesday; and please feel free to send me your questions through the Newspaper area of www.jenniferTVshow.com

Happy New Year!

J.

LEAVE YOUR DIET AT HOME.
COME TO WEIGHT WATCHERS.



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1116918

USC, Georgia win big

The Trojans blasted Illinois and the Bulldogs bit Hawaii in Tuesday's bowl action. **2B**

Valley SPORTS

Perry Coach of the Year

Monessen's Sam Perry has been named the top boy's soccer coach in Class A Section 4. **2B**

Consolation game

West Virginia and Oklahoma would both prefer to be in the BCS Championship game instead of tonight's Fiesta Bowl. **2B**

Sports Trivia

The Jacksonville Jaguars' Fred Taylor is the second cousin of which Pittsburgh Steeler? **2B**

Last night's scores

Pittsburgh 2, Buffalo 1, SO
Washington 6, Ottawa 3
Toronto 4, Tampa Bay 3, SO
Los Angeles 9, Chicago 2

Brian **HERMAN**

RiverRats' leaving area's loss

Thinking out loud again:

■ The news the other day that the Pittsburgh RiverRats may be leaving the area didn't surprise me.

Despite putting a winning product and exciting team on the field, the Mid-Mon Valley didn't do a good job of supporting them.

Most of the crowds at the Ice Garden were disappointing and it probably didn't help that there was a $5 parking charge.

With the exception of Cerini Harley Davidson, there was not one business willing to put up some money to help team owner Jeff Hauser. And most of the crowds for the home contests at the Ice Garden were disappointing

Although Hauser lives in New York, he has area roots with his mother being a Donora native and he attended the University of Pittsburgh.

Not many men would have taken the gamble Hauser did by bringing an indoor professional football team to Rostraver Township.

It ended up costing him more than $100,000.

Unless some area businesses step to the plate within the next day or two, it appears the RiverRats will be doing their thing in Erie from March through May.

That would be the Mid-Mon Valley's loss since Hauser and coach Shawn Liotta signed a number of talented new players to strengthen the only expansion team to make the American Indoor Football Association playoffs in 2007.

Hauser says he'd prefer keeping the RiverRats instead of moving them to Erie.

I believe him.

But time is running out.

If the mid-Mon Valley wants to keep the RiverRats here, businesses should call 1-888-RIV-RATS, ext. 702 this week.

■ Corrections department: Due to a space shortage Monday, a number of items were omitted from the look back at 2007 area sports happenings.

■ The bookies must be getting a little smarter when it comes to the Pittsburgh Steelers' playoff game with Jacksonville Saturday night at Heinz Field.

The Jaguars are now a two-point favorite. Seventy-two hours ago, it was a pick contest.

The Steelers are the lone home underdog with Seattle favored by three-and-a-half over Washington in Saturday's other game with Tampa Bay a three-point choice over the New York Giants and San Diego a nine-point pick over Tennessee in Sunday's contests.

If the Steelers upset the Jaguars, their next game would be at night Jan. 12 in New England against the Patriots.

■ Add Steelers: Coach

Crosby ices Sabres in Winter Classic

Shootout goal gives Penguins victory in NHL's outdoor showcase.

By JOHN WAWROW
AP Sports Writer

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Snow, a sold-out football stadium and Sidney Crosby scoring the shootout winner.

The NHL couldn't have scripted a better finish for its showcase event, the Winter Classic outdoor game, to kick off 2008.

Even Sabres managing partner Larry Quinn couldn't complain, even though Buffalo wound up losing, 2-1, to the Pittsburgh Penguins Tuesday afternoon.

"We did this for the NHL to build the sport," Quinn said, referring to the game being broadcast across North America, on NBC and Canada's CBC. "I was down along the glass for the shootout and at the opening of the game. And the feeling was just hard to describe: The noise, the enthusiasm."

At times it was deafening in a game played before a league-record crowd of 71,217 at Ralph Wilson Stadium in the NHL's second outdoor game, after the Oilers and Montreal Canadiens played in Edmonton in 2003, and first held in the United States.

"You look up at the people and there was just this incredible celebration of our team, of our sport, of our city, our winters, everything. I'm so happy to have had that experience," Quinn said. "I just wish we had gotten a lucky bounce."

Oh, that's right. The Sabres lost, leaving them winless in their past four games (0-2-2).

The winners, besides the Penguins, might have been the publicity-hungry NHL, which offered up a perfect backdrop for its sport — falling snow, end-to-end action, and a suspenseful finish that was decided by its star player, Crosby.

"This was a fun afternoon," NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said. "Based on the response, on our ability to execute, and the inquiries we're getting from other clubs for similar activities, this is something we're going to look at doing at again."

Crosby was honored to be a part of it, noting that it was bigger than a mere regular-season contest.

"Growing up, I played a lot outside," said Crosby, a Nova Scotia native. "When you see 70,000 people jammed into a stadium to watch hockey, it's a good sign. The atmosphere and environment, I don't think you can beat that."

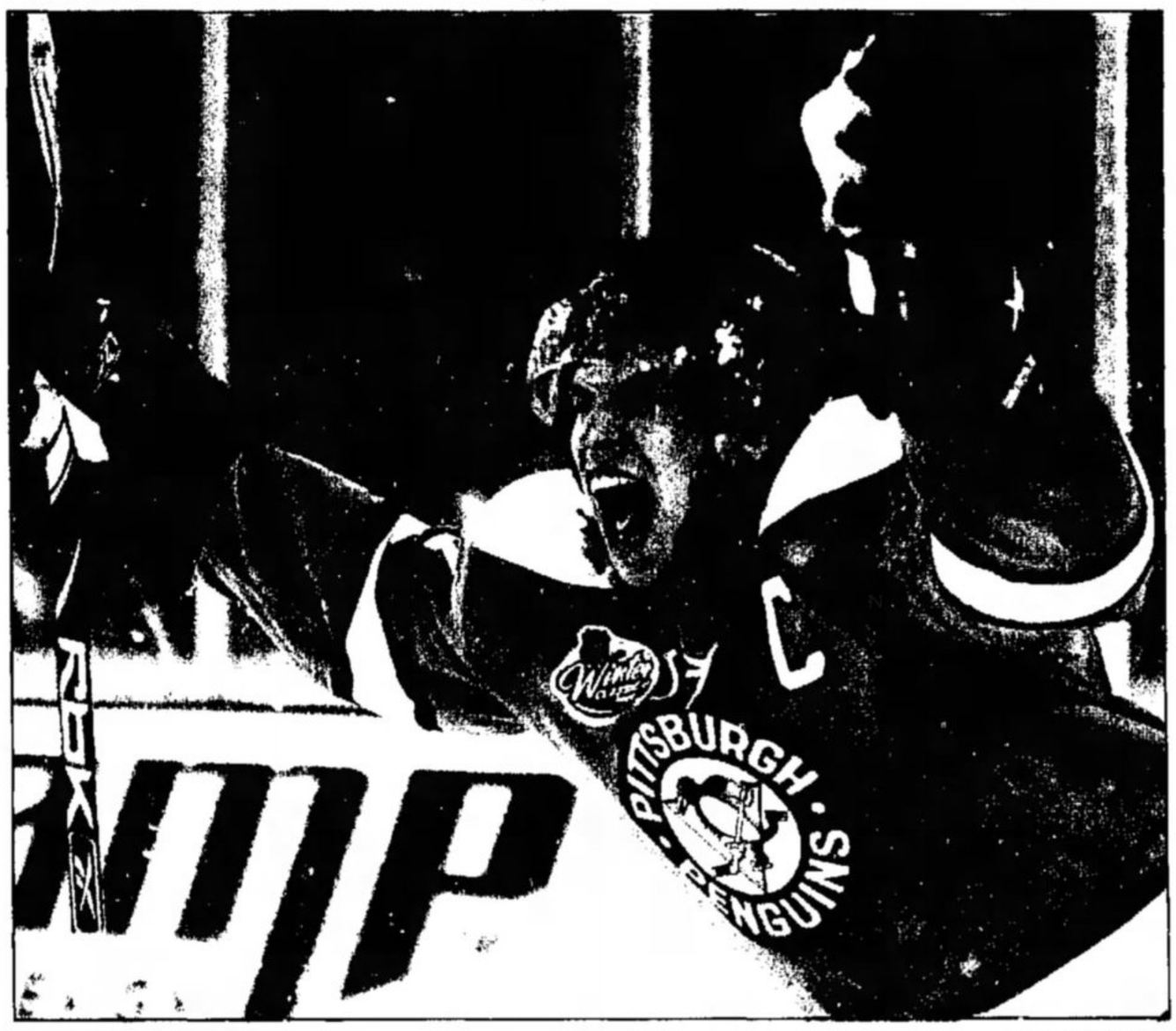
Crosby set up the opening goal, scored by Colby Armstrong, 21 seconds in. Brian Campbell tied it 85 seconds into the second period. And then it came down to a shootout, with Crosby — the Penguins' third and final shooter — somehow slipping a shot past Ryan Miller.

The Penguins won their fourth straight and swept the home-and-home series with the Sabres that started with a 2-0 win at Pittsburgh on Saturday.

To honor the event, both teams dressed in retro-style jerseys, while Buffalo's Lindy Ruff and his coaching staff looked sharp wearing varsity jackets, with the Sabres' old logo — a buffalo above crossed swords — on the chest.

"I'd love to do it again. I thought it was awesome," Ruff said. "It was good for the game. It may not be the best hockey game because of the situation, because of the weather, because of the snow, but the atmosphere was incredible.

(See PENGUINS, Page 3B)



Associated Press

Sidney Crosby celebrates his game-winning goal in a shootout in Tuesday's Winter Classic.

Steelers lose another lineman

Knee injury will end the season for Max Starks.

By ALAN ROBINSON
AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH — Steelers coach Mike Tomlin keeps erasing names on that depth chart on his office wall. Many teams list players three deep at most positions, but the Steelers can't begin to do that.

Two-deep? Can't do that, either.

At left tackle, there's Trai Essex, then no one. At fullback, there's Carey Davis, then no one. At right tackle, there's Willie Colon, then no one.

And if these Steelers lose to Jacksonville at home Saturday night in the AFC playoffs? Tomlin's thinking is they will have no one to blame but themselves.

The Steelers may be without injured running back Willie Parker, defensive end Aaron Smith, offensive tackles Marvel Smith and Max Starks and safety Ryan Clark, but Tomlin said there is no time during a short work week to fret about such problems.

"Whoever hoists that Lombardi Trophy in a month or so will have had injury issues and will have found ways to overcome it," Tomlin said Tuesday. "We don't dwell on that. It's as much a part of the game as blocking and tackling. The healthy guys play and the standard of expectation doesn't change."

Still, the Steelers' already-bad

Max Starks

when Marvel Smith developed a back problem several weeks ago.

For now, former third-stringer Essex is listed as the starter at left tackle. Another option is to shift Pro Bowl left guard Alan Faneca to left tackle and play Chris Kemoeatu, the only healthy backup lineman, at left guard.

"We're not going to tip our hand," Tomlin said. "Trai is the next guy up and the level of expectation will not change. Using common sense, he is the third person to have lined up at that position, so we've got to do some things schematically to help him."

Shifting Faneca to tackle is a strong possibility given the Steelers' season-long problems in protecting quarterback Ben Roethlisberger, who was sacked 47 times in 15 games. The club record is 51 sacks during Cliff Stoudt's one and only season as the starting quarterback in 1983.

The Steelers will add two players, but Tomlin said neither player who signs can be expected

Strong safety Troy Polamalu made the Pro Bowl for the fourth consecutive season but, bothered by knee and shoulder injuries, has only infrequently been the player he was in the past. Wide receiver Hines Ward (knee), cornerbacks Deshea Townsend (foot) and Bryant McFadden (ankle), kick returner Allen Rossum (hamstring) and Roethlisberger (sprained ankle) also aren't 100 percent healthy.

The injuries are coming at key positions, too. Parker was leading the NFL with 1,316 yards rushing when he broke his right leg. Marvel Smith was Roethlisberger's blind-side protector. Aaron Smith is one of the NFL's best run defenders, and the Steelers have been roughed up for 494 yards rushing in three games without him.

The Steelers may not have been so beaten up for a playoff game since 1976. Then, playing without injured 1,000-yard rushers Franco Harris and Rocky Bleier, their 10-game winning streak ended with a 24-7 loss to Oakland in the AFC championship game.

Tomlin won't speculate what effect the injuries have had on his team's late-season slide. The Steelers (10-6) have dropped three of four and four of seven and may be going into the playoffs with less momentum than any of the 12 qualifiers.

"That's a concern," Tomlin said when asked about the Steelers'

Fred Taylor

Taylor no fan of Heinz Field

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Fred Taylor isn't worried as much about the Steelers' home-field advantage as he is their bad field.

Taylor, the Jaguars' star running back, chided the Steelers on Tuesday for their substandard grass field and suggested they spend $1 million on artificial turf to improve one of the NFL's worst playing surfaces.

The Jaguars play an AFC wild card game in Pittsburgh on Saturday night, their second visit

SPORTS

Bulldogs, Trojans look like champs

Georgia, USC turn bowl games into mismatches.

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP College Football Writer

Georgia vs. Southern California, it might have been a heck of game.

Maybe even a national championship game.

We'll never know for sure, but the Bulldogs and Trojans closed their seasons with emphatic victories in the Bowl Championship Series on Tuesday that had to leave college football fans wondering, "What if?"

Led by elusive freshman Joe McKnight and steady senior John David Booty, No. 6 USC beat Illinois 49-17 in a record-setting Rose Bowl romp.

Healthier than they've ben all season, the Trojans (11-2) may very well be playing better than any team in the country right now.

"Everything that was out there for us, we took," USC coach Pete Carroll said. "The rest of it is up for discussion. But would I love to still be playing right now? Sure would. We'd go out there any time, any place, any venue and throw our football out there and see what we could do."

No. 4 Georgia (11-2) could also make a claim to the title of best team right now. The Bulldogs (10-2) closed the season with their seventh straight victory, dismantling Hawaii 41-10 in the Sugar Bowl at the Superdome, where LSU and Ohio State will play for the national championship next week.

"We're the best in the land," Georgia linebacker Marcus Washington said. "We should be playing next week."

It'd be hard to argue against either the Bulldogs or Trojans being No. 1 after the way they rang in the New Year. If nothing else they got a head start on getting to next year's national championship game. Both will be ranked in the top-five to end this season and should be in the mix for preseason No. 1 to start the 2008 campaign.

Associated Press

Georgia's Marcus Howard holds up the Sugar Bowl MVP trophy after the Bulldogs defeated Hawaii 41-10 Tuesday.

While Georgia and USC took all the drama out of the final two of the six New Year's Day bowls, the earlier games were mostly entertaining.

Michigan sent coach Lloyd Carr into retirement with a 41-35 victory over Florida and Heisman Trophy Winner Tim Tebow in the Capital One Bowl. Texas Tech scored 17 points in the fourth quarter to beat Virginia 31-28 in the Gator Bowl. Tennessee quarterback Erik Ainge finished his career with a big game and the Volunteers beat Wisconsin 21-17. Missouri routed Arkansas 38-7 in the Cotton Bowl behind a record-breaking game by running back Tony Temple.

In Pasadena, Calif., the Rose Bowl got the Big Ten-Pac-10 matchup it covets, but Illinois, which sneaked into the BCS only because Ohio State made it to the national title game, wasn't up to the task.

McKnight gained 170 of USC's Rose Bowl-record 633 yards. The 49 points tied a record, too.

The game featured 1,078 total yards of offense, but only for a brief time was did Illinois look like a threat to the Trojans.

Illini star Rashard Mendenhall broke a 79-yard touchdown run early in the third quarter to make it 21-10.

Minutes later, Mendenhall took a screen pass 55 yards, and Ron Zook's 13th-ranked Illini (9-4) had hope. A year after going 2-10, winning the Rose Bowl didn't seem impossible.

But two plays later, USC's Brian Cushing recovered a fumble in the end zone, one of four Illinois turnovers.

"You can't turn the ball over," Zook said. "Whether they were forced or we weren't playing with consistency and the intensity you have to have, I'm not sure."

Moments later, McKnight picked up a lateral on the bounce went 65 yards, setting up Booty's 2-yard TD pass to Fred Davis. That made it 28-10 and the rout was on.

In New Orleans, Georgia brushed aside unbeaten BCS crasher No.10 Hawaii (12-1) every bit as easily.

Knowshon Moreno ran for a pair of touchdowns in the opening quarter and the Bulldogs' defense made life miserable for Colt Brennan, a Heisman Trophy finalist and catalyst for the nation's highest-scoring team. He was sacked eight times, threw three interceptions and lost two fumbles, one of them recovered for a Georgia touchdown by Marcus Howard.

The senior left early after taking a fierce beating, going 22-of-38 for just 169 yards.

"This is not how I wanted my career to end," the senior said.

The Bulldogs led 24-3 by halftime and never let up.

"Let the argument go out there for the people battling with the BCS process to figure this thing out," Carroll said. "I have no answer for them. I just wish we could keep going."

Capital One Bowl
Michigan 41, No. 9 Florida 35

At Orlando, Fla., Chad Henne threw for 373 yards and three touchdowns, Mike Hart ran for 129 yards and two scores and Michigan sent Lloyd Carr out a winner by beating Florida for its first bowl win since 2003.

Henne, Adrian Arrington and Mario Manningham torched Florida's secondary all game. Arrington caught nine passes for 153 yards and two touchdowns, and Manningham added five catches for 78 yards and a score for the Wolverines (9-4).

The Gators (9-4) kept it close thanks to four turnovers and big plays by Tebow and Percy Harvin, who ran 13 times for 165 yards and a TD, and caught nine passes for 77 yards and a score.

Playing with a broken bone in his non-throwing hand and facing constant blitzes, Tebow was 17-of-33 passing for 154 yards and three touchdowns. He also ran 16 times for 57 yards and a score.

Cotton Bowl
No. 7 Missouri 38, No. 25 Arkansas 7

At Dallas, Missouri made its case for having deserved a chance in one of the elite bowl games.

Temple, a 5-foot-9 senior who is often overlooked in Missouri's pass-heavy offense led by Chase Daniel, broke Cotton Bowl records with 281 yards and four touchdowns.

Mizzou (12-2) was ranked No. 1 after beating Kansas in the regular-season finale, then lost badly to Oklahoma in the Big 12 title game.

The No. 25 Razorbacks (8-5) made a horrible impression on incoming coach Bobby Petrino, from the defense allowing the most yards rushing by a single player to the sloppiness of five turnovers. Darren McFadden ran for 105 yards and a touchdown in what could be his final college game.

Outback Bowl
No. 16 Tennessee 21, No. 18 Wisconsin 17

At Tampa, Fla., Ainge threw for 365 yards and two touchdowns to keep No. 18 Wisconsin from joining Michigan as the only Big Ten teams to beat SEC opponents in bowl games three consecutive seasons.

Ainge completed 25 of 43 passes without a turnover to win MVP honors and help the No. 16 Vols (10-4) erase unpleasant memories of a 10-point loss to Penn State in last year's Outback game.

Tyler Donovan completed 14 of 24 passes for 155 yards for the Badgers (9-4). P.J. Hill returned to Wisconsin's offense after sitting out two games and missing part of two others, running for 132 yards on 16 carries.

Gator Bowl
Texas Tech 31, No. 21 Virginia 28

At Jacksonville, Fla., Alex Trlica kicked a 41-yard field goal with 7 seconds left to give Texas Tech a come-from-behind victory over the No. 21 Cavaliers in a wild Gator Bowl.

Texas Tech (9-4) Tech overcame pivotal penalties and a fumble to come back from a 28-14 fourth quarter deficit. Its aggressive pass offense couldn't score much for three quarters, but Graham Harrell still managed to completed 44 of 69 passes for 407 yards, all records, plus three TDs.

The Red Raiders overcame a tremendous effort by Mikell Simpson, who ran for 170 yards on 20 carries — including a NCAA bowl-record 96-yard TD run — and caught another touchdown for Virginia (9-4).

SPORTS DIGEST

Panthers home with Lafayette

PITTSBURGH (AP) — The Pitt men's basketball team will begin the new year with a new lineup when the Panthers host Lafayette at the Petersen Events Center.

Pitt is reeling from losing small forward Mike Cook and point guard Levance Fields in consecutive games last month. Cook is out for the season with a knee injury suffered in Pitt's victory over Duke. Fields broke his foot in an 80-55 upset loss to Dayton and will miss at least two months.

Redshirt freshman Gilbert Brown is replacing Cook, while senior Ronald Ramon is the team's new point guard.

Pitt, ranked 13th in the nation, is 11-1. Lafayette brings an 8-4 record into the game that begins at 7 p.m. today.

Five-year extension for Chargers' Smith

SAN DIEGO (AP) — After building the San Diego Chargers into a consistent playoff contender — if not yet a postseason success — general manager A.J. Smith received a five-year contract extension that will keep him with the team through 2014.

Details weren't announced, but various reports said the extension was worth $11 million. Smith's previous contract was due to expire following the 2009 season.

Game suspension for Lakers' Odom

NEW YORK (AP) — Los Angeles Lakers forward Lamar Odom was suspended for one game without pay for committing a flagrant foul in the fourth quarter of his team's 110-91 loss to the Boston Celtics.

Odom threw himself into Ray Allen and knocked the Boston guard to the floor with 2:56 remaining Sunday night and the outcome already decided. Besides the suspension, Odom was assessed a flagrant foul, penalty two, NBA executive vice president Stu Jackson said in a press release.

Trivia answer

Santonio Holmes.

Perry Coach of the Year

By BILL HUGHES
For The Valley Independent

As he headed into this past season, Monessen High boys' soccer coach Sam Perry didn't know what to expect.

After all, he only returned a handful of starters.

Now that the season is two months removed, Perry can look back with pride on his team and their efforts during the 2007 season.

His Greyhounds went into the last week of the season tied for first place and had they won at South Fayette, they would have had a share of the first soccer title in school history.

Sam Perry

The Greyhounds finished 13-7 including 9-3 in Class A Section 4.

As a result, Perry was named the Class A Section 4 Coach of the Year.

"It means a lot to be named and I am really happy," Perry said. "It was a good season for us."

Perry was quick to point out that the team's success was not all on him.

"I won't take full credit," he said. "I thank the people who helped me."

The assistant coaches were Joe Dalfonso and Bill Halinka.

"The team is what won the award for me," Perry said. "They were the ones playing."

Monessen placed three players on the Section 3 team: striker Jared Dobsch, forward Tarelle Irwin and midfielder Jeremiah Sosnak.

Charleroi placed four players on the team: keeper Zach Carson, defender Dane Hostovich, forward Randy Powell, and forward Sam Spina.

Taylor (FROM PAGE ONE)

Taylor's comments were unexpected only because he ran for 147 yards and the game-winning touchdown on that snow-covered, mushy field during Jacksonville's 29-22 victory in Pittsburgh on Dec. 16.

Also, the Jaguars pride themselves on being a Pittsburgh-like team that wins with the run and a strong defense. Pittsburgh running back Willie Parker calls them "the Steelers of the South."

Taylor, a 10,000-yard career rusher, has 381 yards rushing in his last two games in Pittsburgh, although his 234-yard game there in 2000 came on Three Rivers Stadium's artificial turf.

Despite frequent complaints from visiting players about the slippery and often grass-bare field since Heinz Field opened in 2001, the Steelers have stayed with grass mostly because their players often plead with owner Dan Rooney to keep it.

The Steelers put down a new layer of sod after four high school games and a Pitt game were played at Heinz Field in a span of 30 hours Nov. 23-24.

However, monsoon-like rains created ankle-deep water and muck for the Steelers' 3-0 win over Miami on Nov. 26.

An NFL operations official stayed in Pittsburgh the following week to monitor the conditions, and the field help up six days later for the Steelers' 24-10 victory over Cincinnati on Dec. 2 despite more rain.

Snow fell and strong winds blew throughout the Jacksonville game two weeks later, yet the Jaguars outgained the Steelers 421-217 and outrushed them 224-115. The Jaguars were the only visiting team to beat the Steelers in Heinz Field this season.

No matter, Taylor wants to see artificial turf the next time he travels to Pittsburgh.

"I prefer grass, but these cold-weather teams, late in the season, they allow high schools to play on their field and they allow colleges to play on their field," said Taylor, ninth in the league with 1,202 yards rushing. "It just goes completely bad. So I think a million-dollar investment won't hurt their pockets."

The weather may not be the factor for this game as it was in the Steelers' last three home games. The early forecast calls for an unseasonably mild daytime high of 49, cloudy skies and no precipitation.

Jacksonville coach Jack Del Rio doesn't share Taylor's dislike of Heinz Field, perhaps because the Jaguars have won their last two games there. They won 23-17 in 2005, when the Steelers went on to win the Super Bowl.

"It's a better field now than it has been," Del Rio said. "Usually at this time of the year, with all the play it gets, it's really worn. All in all, it's a good, solid field."

Steelers coach Mike Tomlin seem pleased to hear of Taylor's comments, if only because they suggest the field might prove a distraction to the Jaguars.

"Sure it is (an advantage), if he feels that way," Tomlin said. "I don't know anybody on our team that hates our field."

Fiesta Bowl not first choice for Sooners, Mountaineers

By The Associated Press

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Welcome to the BCS consolation bracket, otherwise known as the Fiesta Bowl.

Third-ranked Oklahoma thought it deserved a shot at the Bowl Championship Series title after a series of late-season upsets shook up the BCS standings. But the Sooners finished behind another twice-beaten team, LSU.

No. 11 West Virginia only needed to beat Pitt - a team that lost to Navy - in Morgantown to clinch a berth in the national title game. The Mountaineers stumbled to a 13-9 loss, then watched coach Rich Rodriguez bolt for Michigan two weeks later.

Denied a shot at No. 1, the Sooners and the Mountaineers have to manufacture motivation as they prepare to meet in the Fiesta Bowl tonight.

After a week of workouts in the desert sunshine, they say they're ready to go.

"Both teams have been in the national title hunt all year," Oklahoma strong safety D.J. Wolfe said. "Both teams are trying to go out and show the world what we can do."

Each side has something to play for, though it's not as obvious or compelling as a national title.

For the Sooners, the game represents a chance to erase the painful memories of last January's loss to Boise State on the same field. Coach Bob Stoops dismisses the notion that there's been any carryover from that game, considered by many to be one of the great bowl games in colleg football history.

But many Sooners say that beating the Mountaineers would help atone for loss to the Broncos.

"I can't wait to play this game and get rid of that memory," Sooners linebacker Curtis Lofton said.

Oklahoma also wants to end a recent BCS bowl slump. The Sooners have dropped three straight BCS games, losing to LSU in the Sugar Bowl after the 2003 season, to USC in the Orange Bowl after the 2004 season and to Boise State last January.

Stewart

Oklahoma, which won the 2000 national title, is 2-3 in BCS bowls. The Sooners' sixth BCS appearance is matched only by Florida State, Ohio State and Southern California. But the Sooners aren't satisfied with simply playing in the elite bowls.

"I think this could be a statement for us," Sooner guard Duke Robinson said. "We are going to make sure we come out prepared."

West Virginia, meanwhile, looks to rebound from a dispiriting December in which the Mountaineers lost a shot at the national title and their head coach. It wasn't an ideal way to prepare for a game against the Sooners, their toughest test of the season.

"I think this is going to be the biggest game we have this (season) because of what happened," wide receiver Darius Reynaud said.

SPORTS

High school boys' standings

Class AAA

	Sec. 4 W	L	Overall W	L
Chartiers Valley	2	0	10	1
Keystone Oaks	2	0	6	6
South Park	1	1	4	8
Ringgold	1	1	4	9
McGuffey	0	2	3	7
Trinity	0	2	1	9

Today
Laurel Highlands at Ringgold
Thursday
Brentwood at Chartiers Valley

	Sec. 5 W	L	Overall W	L
Yough	2	0	6	6
Steel Valley	1	1	8	2
Belle Vernon Area	1	1	8	3
West Mifflin	1	1	5	6
Thomas Jefferson	1	1	2	7
Elizabeth Forward	0	2	2	10

Today
Belle Vernon Area at Keystone Oaks
Elizabeth Forward at Uniontown
Thursday
Thoms Jefferson at Belle Vernon Area

Class AA

	Sec. 5 W	L	Overall W	L
Washington	5	0	11	3
Monessen	5	0	9	4
Burgettstown	3	2	8	3
Brownsville	3	2	7	5
C-Houston	2	3	7	6
Charleroi	2	3	6	7
Beth-Center	0	5	3	8
Waynesburg	0	5	2	9

Today
Derry at Monessen
Thursday
Carmichaels at Beth-Center

Class A

	Sec. 2 W	L	Overall W	L
California	2	0	7	3
Geibel	1	0	2	7
Carmichaels	1	1	6	3
Jeff-Morgan	1	1	4	8
Mapletown	0	1	5	4
West Greene	0	2	1	8

Today
California at East Allegheny

	Sec. 3 W	L	Overall W	L
Bentworth	3	0	8	2
Serra	1	0	7	1
Sacred Heart	3	2	3	9
Clairton	2	2	4	6
Cornell	2	2	7	5
Avella	1	3	4	7
Frazier	0	3	1	9

Today
Serra at Bentworth
Sacred Heart at Wilkinsburg
St. Joseph at Clairton

High school girls' standings

Class AAA

	Sec. 4 W	L	Overall W	L
Ringgold	2	0	8	2
McGuffey	1	1	6	5
Chartiers Valley	1	1	6	6
West Allegheny	1	1	6	6
Keystone Oaks	1	1	4	6
Waynesburg	0	2	3	8

Thursday
Ringgold at McGuffey
West Allegheny at Keystone Oaks

	Sec. 5 W	L	Overall W	L
West Mifflin	2	0	9	3
Thomas Jefferson	2	0	5	7
Elizabeth Forward	1	1	9	2
Steel Valley	1	1	7	3
Yough	0	2	5	7
Belle Vernon Area	0	2	3	7

Thursday
Thomas Jefferson at Belle Vernon Area (6 p.m.)
Steel Valley at Elizabeth Forward
West Mifflin at Yough

Class AA

	Sec. 5 W	L	Overall W	L
Washington	4	0	11	0
Brownsville	3	2	10	3
Beth-Center	3	2	8	4
Bentworth	2	2	7	5
Charleroi	2	2	5	6
C-Houston	1	3	4	8
Burgettstown	0	4	2	11

Today
Charleroi at Yough
Thursday
C-Houston at Charleroi
Washington at Bentworth
Brownsville at Burgettstown

Class A

	Sec. 2 W	L	Overall W	L
Geibel	2	0	6	5
Carmichaels	2	0	4	7
California	1	1	3	7
West Greene	1	1	1	10
Mapletown	0	2	6	4
Jeff-Morgan	0	2	1	10

Thursday
California at Mapletown
Geibel at West Greene
Jeff-Morgan at Carmichaels

	Sec. 3 W	L	Overall W	L
Monessen	3	0	12	0
Serra	1	0	5	2
Clairton	3	1	5	4
Avella	1	1	5	5
Trinity Christian	0	3	3	8
Frazier	0	3	0	12

Today
Monessen at Serra
Thursday
Monessen at Avella
Trinity Christian at Serra

College basketball

MEN
SOUTH
Cincinnati 58, Louisville 57
Clemson 87, Alabama 61
MIDWEST
Illinois St. 49, Wichita St. 46
SOUTHWEST
Texas Tech 79, Lamar 77

WOMEN
SOUTH
Xavier 51, Kentucky 46
MIDWEST
S. Dakota St. 91, Minn. Duluth 57
SOUTHWEST
Oral Roberts 60, Texas-Pan American 40

Bob Stoops will lead Oklahoma against West Virginia in the Fiesta Bowl at 8:15 p.m. on Channel 53.

Sports dial

Today
Television
7 p.m. - ESPN2 - Rutgers at South Florida, college basketball.
7 p.m. - Versus - Atlanta at Carolina, hockey.
8 p.m. - ESPN - Kent State at North Carolina, college basketball.
8:15 p.m. - Channel 53 - West Virginia vs Oklahoma, college football.
9 p.m. - ESPN2 - Penn State at Northwestern, college basketball.
Radio
7 p.m. - KQV (1410) - Duquesne at Bowling Green, college basketball.
7 p.m. - WWSW (94.5 FM), WBGG (970) - Lafayette at Pitt, college basketball.
7:30 p.m. - WMBS (590) - Elizabeth Forward at Uniontown, high school basketball.

NHL standings

EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
New Jersey	21	14	3	45	92	91
Pittsburgh	21	16	2	44	111	112
N.Y. Rangers	20	15	4	44	97	94
N.Y. Islanders	20	16	2	42	94	104
Philadelphia	19	14	4	42	115	105

Northeast Division

	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Ottawa	25	10	4	54	139	110
Montreal	19	13	7	45	116	109
Boston	19	16	4	42	102	105
Buffalo	19	16	3	41	115	107
Toronto	16	16	8	40	116	127

Southeast Division

	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	20	18	3	43	126	132
Atlanta	19	20	1	39	111	132
Florida	18	18	3	39	98	106
Washington	16	19	5	37	112	125
Tampa Bay	15	21	4	34	115	134

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Central Division

	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Detroit	29	8	3	61	141	88
St. Louis	19	14	4	42	94	96
Columbus	18	15	6	42	98	94
Chicago	19	16	3	41	114	113
Nashville	18	18	2	38	103	114

Northwest Division

	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Vancouver	22	14	4	48	105	93
Minnesota	22	15	2	46	103	107
Colorado	21	15	3	45	115	112
Calgary	19	14	7	45	116	117
Edmonton	16	20	4	36	103	122

Pacific Division

	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Dallas	23	13	4	50	122	100
San Jose	22	12	5	49	100	89
Anaheim	19	17	5	43	101	112
Phoenix	18	18	1	37	94	101
Los Angeles	15	24	2	32	116	133

Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss or shootout loss.
Tuesday's Games
Pittsburgh 2, Buffalo 1, SO
Washington 6, Ottawa 3
Toronto 4, Tampa Bay 3, SO
Los Angeles 9, Chicago 2
Today's Games
Atlanta at Carolina, 7 p.m.
Florida at New Jersey, 7 p.m.
Dallas at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Edmonton at St. Louis, 8:30 p.m.
Phoenix at Colorado, 9 p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Calgary, 9 p.m.
Columbus at Anaheim, 10 p.m.

Penguins summary

Pittsburgh	1	0	0	0	— 2
Buffalo	0	1	0	0	— 1

Pittsburgh won shootout 2-1
First Period—1, Pittsburgh, Armstrong 6 (Crosby), :21. Penalties—Connolly, Buf (hooking), 4:22; Afinogenov, Buf (hooking), 7:16; Vanek, Buf (holding), 12:17; Armstrong, Pit (goaltender interference), 13:02.
Second Period—2, Buffalo, Campbell 4 (Connolly, Paille), 1:25. Penalties—None.
Third Period—None. Penalties—Armstrong, Pit (hooking), 20:00.
Overtime—None. Penalties—None.
Shootout—Pittsburgh 2 (Christensen NG, Letang G, Crosby G), Buffalo 1 (Kotalik G, Connolly NG, Afinogenov NG).
Shots on Goal—Pittsburgh 11-2-12-0—25. Buffalo 9-14-7-7—37.
Power-play opportunities—Pittsburgh 0 of 3; Buffalo 0 of 2.
Goalies—Pittsburgh, Conklin 5-0-0 (37 shots-36 saves). Buffalo, Miller 17-14-3 (25-24).
A—71,217 (18,690). T—3:11.

Mid-Atlantic Hockey League

	W	L	T	Pts
Indiana	19	1	0	38
Jamestown	9	11	0	18
Wooster	8	10	1	17
Mon Valley	6	10	3	15
Valley Forge	6	11	1	13

Monday
Indiana 10, Wooster 2
Jamestown 5, Valley Forge 4
Today
Mon Valley at Wooster (7 p.m.)
Friday
Indiana at Jamestown
Valley Forge at Wooster
Saturday
Wooster at Mon Valley (7:30 p.m.)
Valley Forge at Jamestown

Bowl glance

Tuesday, Jan. 1
Outback Bowl
At Tampa, Fla.
Tennessee 21, Wisconsin 17
Cotton Bowl
At Dallas
Missouri 38, Arkansas 7
Capital One Bowl
At Orlando, Fla.
Michigan 41, Florida 35
Gator Bowl
At Jacksonville, Fla.
Payout: $2.25 million
Texas Tech 31, Virginia 28
Rose Bowl
At Pasadena, Calif.
Payout: $17 million
Southern California 49, Illinois 17
Sugar Bowl
At New Orleans
Payout: $17 million
Georgia 41, Hawaii 10

Today's Game
Fiesta Bowl
At Glendale, Ariz.
Payout: $17 million
West Virginia (10-2) vs. Oklahoma (11-2), 8 p.m. (FOX)

Thursday, Jan. 3
Orange Bowl
At Miami
Payout: $17 million
Kansas (11-1) vs. Virginia Tech (11-2), 8 p.m. (FOX)

Saturday, Jan. 5
International Bowl
At Toronto
Payout: $750,000
Rutgers (7-4) vs. Ball State (7-5), Noon (ESPN2)

Sunday, Jan. 6
GMAC Bowl
Mobile, Ala.
Payout: $750,000
Tulsa (9-4) vs. Bowling Green (8-4), 8 p.m. (ESPN)

Monday, Jan. 7
BCS National Championship
At New Orleans
Payout: $17 million
Ohio State (11-1) vs. LSU (11-2), 8 p.m. (FOX)

Saturday, Jan. 12
Hula Bowl at Honolulu
Aina (East) vs. Kai (West), 8 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 19
East-West Shrine Classic
At Houston
East vs. West, 7 p.m. (ESPN2)

Saturday, Jan. 26
Senior Bowl
At Mobile, Ala.
North vs. South, 4 p.m. (NFLN)

NFL playoffs

Wild-card Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 5
Washington at Seattle, 4:30 p.m. (NBC)
Jacksonville at Pittsburgh, 8 p.m. (NBC)
Sunday, Jan. 6
N.Y. Giants at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m. (FOX)
Tennessee at San Diego, 4:30 p.m. (CBS)

Divisional Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 12
Seattle, Tampa Bay or N.Y. Giants at Green Bay, 4:30 p.m. (FOX)
Pittsburgh, Jacksonville, Tennessee at New England, 8 p.m. (CBS)
Sunday, Jan. 13
San Diego, Pittsburgh or Jacksonville at Indianapolis, 1 p.m. (CBS)
Tampa Bay, N.Y. Giants or Washington at Dallas, 4:30 p.m. (FOX)

Conference Championships
Sunday, Jan. 20

Super Bowl
Sunday, Feb. 3
Glendale, Ariz.

NBA standings

EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	26	3	.897	—
Toronto	17	15	.531	10 1/2
New Jersey	14	16	.467	12 1/2
Philadelphia	14	17	.452	13
New York	8	21	.276	18

Southeast Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Orlando	22	11	.667	—
Atlanta	15	13	.536	4 1/2
Washington	15	14	.517	5
Charlotte	11	18	.379	9
Miami	8	23	.258	13

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Detroit	24	7	.774	—
Indiana	15	17	.469	9 1/2
Cleveland	14	17	.452	10
Chicago	11	18	.379	12
Milwaukee	11	19	.367	12 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Southwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	21	8	.724	—
Dallas	20	11	.645	2
New Orleans	20	11	.645	2
Houston	15	16	.484	7
Memphis	8	22	.267	13 1/2

Northwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Denver	18	12	.600	—
Portland	18	13	.581	1/2
Utah	17	16	.515	2 1/2
Seattle	9	22	.290	9 1/2
Minnesota	4	26	.133	14

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Phoenix	22	9	.710	—
L.A. Lakers	19	11	.633	2 1/2
Golden State	19	13	.594	3 1/2
Sacramento	11	18	.379	10
L.A. Clippers	10	19	.345	11

Monday's Games
Orlando 112, Chicago 110, OT
Charlotte 107, Indiana 103, OT
Detroit 114, Milwaukee 69
Golden State 112, Houston 95
Utah 111, Portland 101
Toronto 97, New Orleans 92
L.A. Clippers 91, Minnesota 82
Philadelphia 98, Seattle 90
Tuesday's Games
No games scheduled
Today's Games
New Jersey at Orlando, 7 p.m.
Memphis at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Detroit at Washington, 7 p.m.
Atlanta at Cleveland, 7 p.m.
Chicago at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Milwaukee at Miami, 7:30 p.m.
Houston at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
Sacramento at New York, 7:30 p.m.
Portland at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
Golden State at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Utah, 9 p.m.
New Orleans at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.

Latest Line

BEST BET: West Virginia is coming off a shocking 13-9 home loss to lowly Pittsburgh that knocked the Mountaineers out of the BCS Championship Game. To add insult to injury, head coach Rich Rodriguez has left to coach Michigan. Can West Virginia possibly be ready to face a very good Oklahoma team? In the last 10 Fiesta Bowls, the team entering the game with the better straight-up record is a perfect 10-0 straight-up and vs. the spread. Take Oklahoma -7 for another Best Bet winner.

NFL

Favorite	Points	Underdog
Saturday, Jan 5		
Wild Card Round		
SEATTLE	3 1/2 (40)	Washington
Jacksonville	2 (39)	PITT.
Sunday, Jan 6		
Wild Card Round		
TAMPA BAY	3 (39)	NY Giants
SAN DIEGO	9 (40)	Tennessee

College Football Bowl Games

Favorite	Points	Underdog
Fiesta Bowl		
University of Phoenix Stadium		
Oklahoma	7 (63)	W. Virginia
Thursday, Jan 3		
Orange Bowl		
Dolphins Stadium-Miami, FL.		
Virginia Tech	3 1/2 (53)	Kansas
Saturday, Jan 5		
International Bowl		
Rogers Centre-Toronto, Canada.		
Rutgers	10 (60)	Ball State
Sunday, Jan 6		
GMAC Bowl		
Ladd Peebles Stadium-Mobile, AL.		
Tulsa	5 (76)	Bowling Gr.
Monday, Jan 7		
BCS Championship Game		
Louisiana Superdome		
New Orleans, LA.		
LSU	4 (48)	Ohio State

NBA

Favorite	Points	Underdog
ORLANDO	6 1/2	New Jersey
Detroit	5 1/2	WASHINGTON
CHARLOTTE	1	Chicago
CLEVELAND	4 1/2	Atlanta
INDIANA	6 1/2	Memphis
BOSTON	11	Houston
MIAMI	5 1/2	Milwaukee
NEW YORK	3	Sacramento
Portland	5	MINNESOTA
DALLAS	6	Golden State
UTAH	9 1/2	Philadelphia
New Orleans	5	LA CLIPPERS

College Basketball

Favorite	Points	Underdog
George Mason	10	GEORGIA STATE
TEXAS	21 1/2	Tcu
MASS.	6	Houston
Va C'wealth	3 1/2	J. MADISON
WL. & MARY	7 1/2	Delaware
OLD DOMIN.	15	Hofstra
SYRACUSE	12 1/2	St. John's
SOUTH FLA	10	Rutgers
Wisconsin	7 1/2	MICHIGAN
DAYTON	5	Akron
Creighton	3 1/2	INDIANA STATE
TOWSON ST	2	Northeastern
Duquesne	2	BOWLING GR.
YALE	3 1/2	Portland
S. Alabama	7	FLA ATLANTIC
W. KENTUCKY	15	Middle Tenn St
DREXEL	3	NC Wilmington
MIAMI-FLA	21	Pennsylvania
Lsu	3 1/2	TULANE
N. CAROLINA	23 1/2	Kent State
MISSOURI ST	8	Bradley
N. IOWA	15	Evansville
DRAKE	3	Southern Illinois
N. ORLEANS	5	Ark Little Rock
BOISE STATE	14 1/2	San Jose State
New Mexico	2	TEXAS EL PASO
Indiana	9	IOWA
N'WESTERN	1	Penn State
DENVER	1 1/2	La-Monroe
N. Mexico St	9	IDAHO
PACIFIC	14 1/2	Cal Riverside
SE MO. ST	5	E. Kentucky

NHL

Favorite	Goals	Underdog
NEW JERSEY	1/2-1	Florida
CAROLINA	1/2-1	Atlanta
DETROIT	1/2-1	Dallas
ST. LOUIS	1/2-1	Edmonton
COLORADO	1/2-1	Phoenix
CALGARY	Even-1/2	NY Rangers
ANAHEIM	1/2-1	Columbus

HOME TEAM IN CAPS

Sports moves

BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association
NBA—Suspended Los Angeles Lakers F Lamar Odom one game for being assessed a flagrant foul, penalty two against Ray Allen in a Dec. 30 game against Boston.

FOOTBALL
National Football League
SAN DIEGO CHARGERS—Signed A.J. Smith, general manager, to a five-year contract extension through 2014.
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS—Placed DT Baraka Atkins on injured reserve. Signed WR Logan Payne from the practice squad. Signed DT Kelly Talavou to the practice squad.

HOCKEY
National Hockey League
ATLANTA THRASHERS—Promoted Brad McCrimmon to associate coach.
CAROLINA HURRICANES—Placed D Bret Hedican on injured reserve. Recalled D Casey Borer from Albany (AHL).
COLORADO AVALANCHE—Recalled C T.J. Hensick from Lake Erie (AHL).
COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS—Assigned C Gilbert Brule to Syracuse (AHL).
MONTREAL CANADIENS—Assigned F Corey Locke to Hamilton (AHL).
NEW JERSEY DEVILS—Placed LW Jay Pandolfo and D Karel Rachunek on injured reserve. Recalled LW Noah Clarke and RW Barry Tallackson from Lowell (AHL).

Penguins
(FROM PAGE ONE)

"The hell with the cynics."

There only a few drawbacks, mostly involving the snow that fell for most of the afternoon and made it sometimes difficult for the players to move the puck. That led to numerous stoppages to allow NHL crews to clean the ice with shovels and Zambonis.

Surprisingly, the Zambonis didn't clean the ice prior to the start of the shootout as they would during regular NHL games.

Three trouble spots cropped up on the ice along the wall in front of the players' benches, two in the zone Buffalo defended in the first period. Before the Penguins' third power play of the frame, with 7:43 remaining, the ice crew did patch work that caused a delay for several minutes.

Otherwise, there were few complaints.

"It was probably the toughest game, conditions-wise," Penguins coach Michel Therrien said. "I thought the NHL did a great job with the ice. There were times when it was pretty tough, but they took care of it right away."

It was a hit, too, for the fans, who arrived early and stayed until the end. Several young men went most of the game without their shirts, while one enthusiastic patron held a poster that read, "Look Mom, no roof."

SPORTS HISTORY

30 Years Ago

Joe Montana threw for 111 yards and a touchdown in Notre Dame's 38-10 Cotton Bowl win over No. 1Texas.

Alabama, a one-point favorite, clobbered Ohio State, 35-6, in the Sugar Bowl.

Arkansas shocked No. 2 Oklahoma, 31-6, in the Orange Bowl.

20 Years Ago

Ringgold's Melissa Lazzari (15.4) and Monessen's Nadine Turner (15.3) were leading the area girls' high school basketball scoring race.

10 Years Ago

Seth Miller scored 18 points in Belle Vernon Area's 60-28 romp over Charleroi.

Monessen downed Carmichaels, 55-41, behind Dave Stein's 17 points.

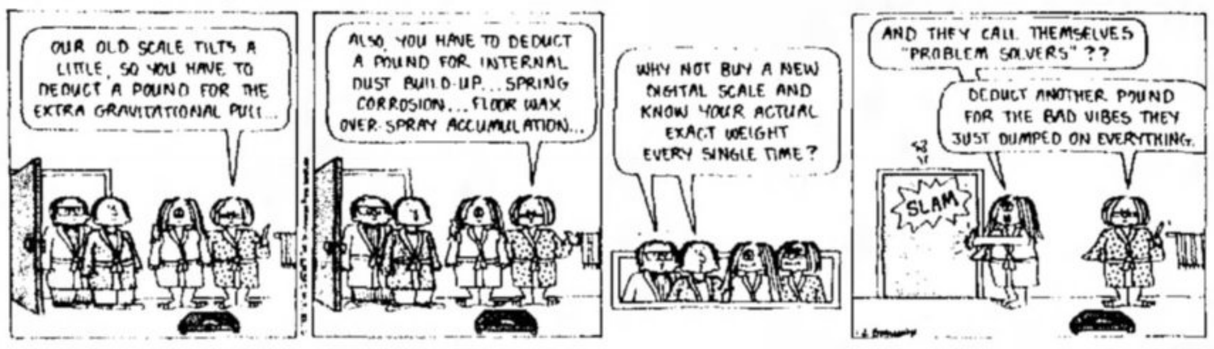
Tim O'Rourke had 28 points in Ringgold's 50-46 loss to West Mifflin.

Bryant Thomas poured in 43 points in Bentworth's 85-77 loss to Geibel.

Official
Mike Lange
Shirts
Make it a hockey night in Pittsburgh every day of the week with official Mike Lange t-shirts.
ON SALE NOW
only at pittsburghpenguins.com.
With three of Pittsburgh's all-time favorite sayings to choose from, you can select your favorite or purchase all three. Inspired by phrases made famous by the Penguins Hall-of-Fame broadcaster, shirts include: It's a Hockey Night in Pittsburgh, Buy Sam a Drink and Get His Dog One Too, and Michael, Michael, Motorcycle. Order your Mike Lange t-shirts today, exclusively at pittsburghpenguins.com!
*ONLY $20 each
FREE SHIPPING
when you order 2 or more!
*XXL $21 each
Pittsburgh, PA
It's a HOCKEY NIGHT in PITTSBURGH
BUY SAM A DRINK
...AND GET HIS DOG ONE TOO!

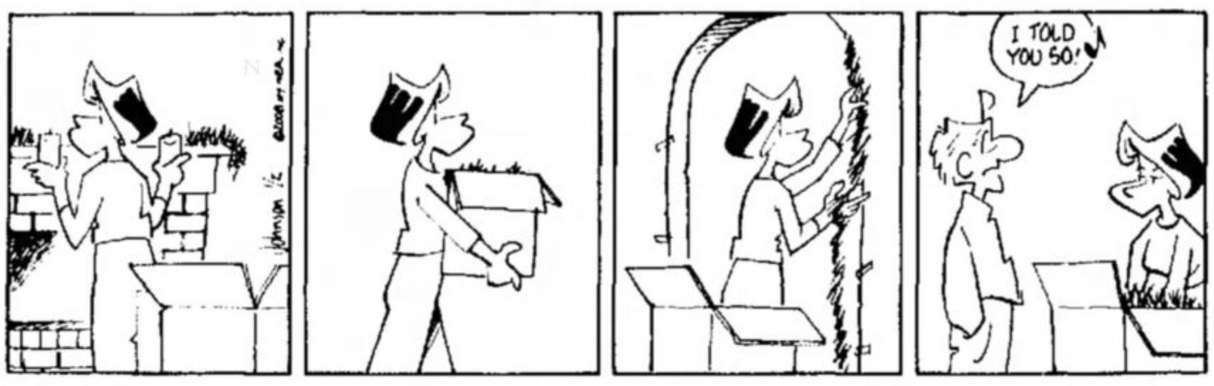
COMICS

CATHY® by Cathy Guisewite


OUR OLD SCALE TILTS A LITTLE, SO YOU HAVE TO DEDUCT A POUND FOR THE EXTRA GRAVITATIONAL PULL...
ALSO, YOU HAVE TO DEDUCT A POUND FOR INTERNAL DUST BUILD-UP... SPRING CORROSION... FLOOR WAX OVER-SPRAY ACCUMULATION...
WHY NOT BUY A NEW DIGITAL SCALE AND KNOW YOUR ACTUAL EXACT WEIGHT EVERY SINGLE TIME?
AND THEY CALL THEMSELVES "PROBLEM SOLVERS"??
DEDUCT ANOTHER POUND FOR THE BAD VIBES THEY JUST DUMPED ON EVERYTHING.
SLAM

GARFIELD® by Jim Davis

ARLO and JANIS® by Jimmy Johnson



Classic PEANUTS® by Charles M. Schulz

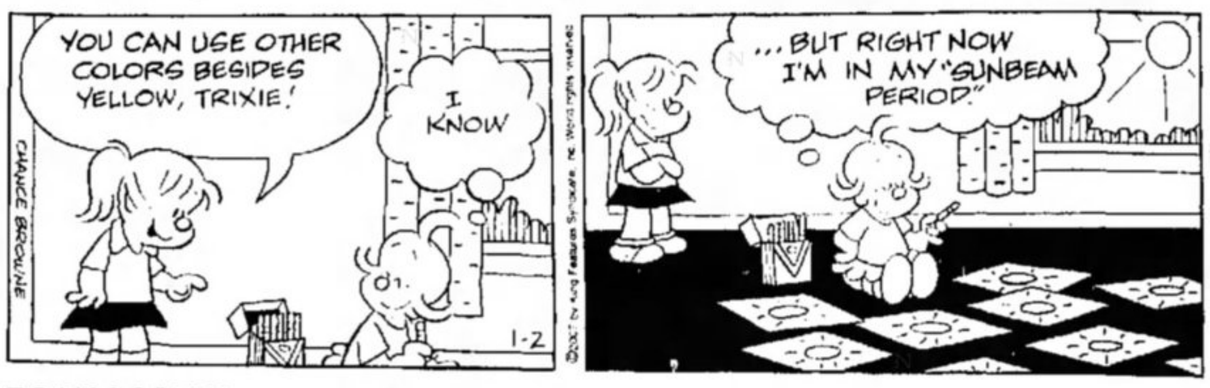
YES, MA'AM..WE'VE MISSED YOU AT SCHOOL..WE THOUGHT MAYBE YOU'VE BEEN SICK..WE BROUGHT YOU SOME FLOWERS..
WHO ARE WE? WE'RE A COUPLE OF YOUR STAR PUPILS..
CHECK THE ADDRESS AGAIN, MARCIE..
I KNEW IT.. WE HAVE THE WRONG HOUSE!
SHE KEPT THE FLOWERS..

MONTY® by Jim Meddick

E-Mail: JimMeddick@aol.com

THAT WAS SOME NEW YEAR'S PARTY! THANKS FOR LETTING US SLEEP ON YOUR FLOOR.
DON'T MENTION IT
SHHH!
OH I FORGOT... "MR DESIGNATED DRIVER" OVER HERE HAS A HANGOVER
SHHH.
SHHHHH.
I'M NOT SAYING ANYTHING!
YOUR NOSTRIL'S WHISTLING.

HI & LOIS® by Mort Walker and Dick Browne



BEETLE BAILEY® by Mort Walker

HOW DOES MY SCHEDULE LOOK FOR THE WEEK?
YOU HAVE NOTHING TODAY, NOTHING TOMORROW, NOTHING FRIDAY AND NOTHING ALL NEXT WEEK
1-2
I GUESS NOBODY WANTS TO SEE YOU ABOUT ANYTHING
DID I ASK YOU FOR AN OPINION?!
GREG'T MORT WALKER

BORN LOSER® by Art Sansom

GOODBYE, MOTHER GARGLE! AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU!
RIGHT BACK AT YA! AND I HOPE I'LL SEE MORE OF YOU IN 2008!
OF COURSE, THE WAY YOU PACK IN THE CHOW, THAT'S INEVITABLE!
1/2

GRIZZWELLS® by Bill Schorr

COW AND BOY® by Mark Leiknes

NOTHING LIKE A HOT CUP OF COCOA AFTER BEING OUT IN THE BITTER COLD.
AHHH, HEAVEN. SLURP
WHOOPS, STEAMED UP THE WINDOW.
SQUEEK SQUEEK
I HATE YOU.

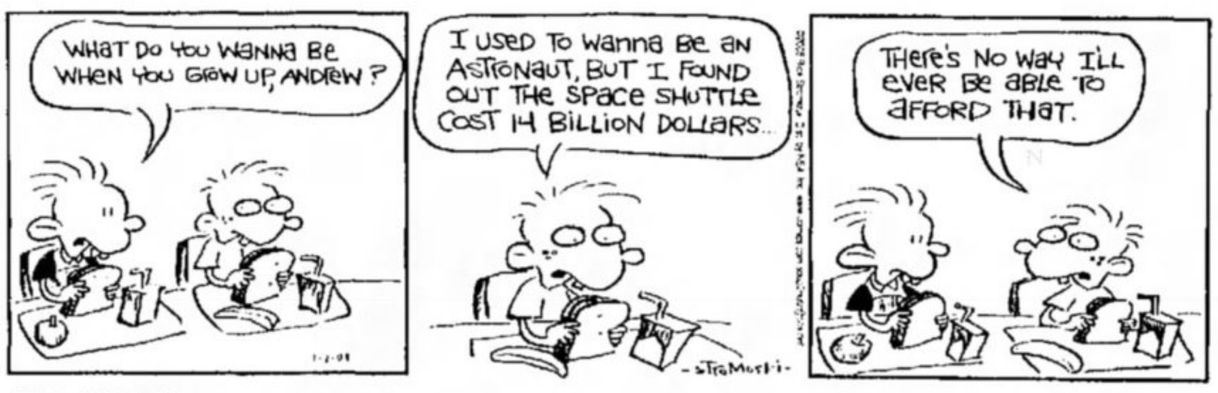
FRANK and ERNEST® by Bob Thaves

HERMAN® by Jim Unger

"He says you gotta go to bed and take a couple of aspirins."

KIT'N' CARLYLE® by Larry Wright

SOUP TO NUTZ™ by Rick Stromoski


WHAT DO YOU WANNA BE WHEN YOU GROW UP, ANDREW?
I USED TO WANNA BE AN ASTRONAUT, BUT I FOUND OUT THE SPACE SHUTTLE COST 14 BILLION DOLLARS...
THERE'S NO WAY I'LL EVER BE ABLE TO AFFORD THAT.
-STROMOSKI-

BIG NATE® by Lincolin Peirce

CHESTER. MY MAN! MAKE ANY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS?
WHAT'S THAT?
A RESOLUTION? IT'S SORT OF LIKE A PLEDGE TO, Y'KNOW, CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOR.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY BEHAVIOR?
WHAT?... N-NOTHING! I LOVE YOUR BEHAVIOR! I WOULDN'T CHANGE A THING IF I WERE YOU!
... EXCEPT PERHAPS TO ATTEND THE OCCASIONAL COUNSELING SESSION.

ALLEY OOP® by Dave Graue

I WISH I COULD SEE ALLEY'S FACE WHEN HE REALIZES HE DOESN'T HAVE HIS TRINKET ANYMORE! HEH! HEH! IT'S GONNA BURN HIS BISCUITS!
1-2-08 © 2008 by NEA, Inc.
MEANWHILE, ALLEY OOP APPROACHES MOO...
WHAT JOY THAT FATE HAS BROUGHT YOU HERE TO CELEBRATE THIS GREAT NEW YEAR!
FOOZY!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

MARK TRAIL® by Jack Elrod

THE DOCTOR SAID THE X-RAYS SHOWED THE CANCER HAD SPREAD TOO MUCH TO OPERATE... I COULD DIE AT ANY TIME!
WILL YOU HELP FREE JOHNNY FROM BEING PROSECUTED FOR SOMETHING YOU DID?
YEAH, WHY NOT, I ALREADY HAVE A DEATH SENTENCE...NOW YOU LEAVE, I'D LIKE TO MAKE SOME PLANS WITH MY BUSINESS PARTNERS!
JACK ELROD
WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS, MR. WILSON...WHY DO SO MANY PONTOON PLANES FLY IN HERE?
THEY'RE SPORTSMEN HERE TO ENJOY THE FISHING!

The Valley Independent Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1 Painted tinware
5 Soda-can opener
8 Zilch
12 Aroma
13 Ms. Thurman
14 Not written
15 Diner's options
16 Bargain event (hyph.)
18 Quiet
20 High desert of Asia
21 Carder's demands
22 Time period
23 Fissures
26 Crinkled fabrics
29 — slaw
30 Custom
31 Popular cruise stop
33 Miscellany
34 Parched
35 Pickle choice
36 Took to the ice
38 Dishwasher phase
39 Address part
40 Forbid
41 Think ahead
43 Parking place
46 Impermeable substance
48 Recital piece
50 Impulse
51 "Norma —"
52 Small combo
53 Butte kin
54 Belt maker's tool
55 You bet!

DOWN

1 Back-fence yowler
2 Poet's tributes
3 Unattended
4 Well-read
5 Clumps of grass
6 Marie's pal
7 Cakelike cookie
8 Forget it! (2 wds.)
9 Emir, maybe
10 Limp-watch painter
11 Malt beverage
17 Wading bird
19 Mag fillers
22 Urn homophone
23 NEC competitor
24 Charged particles
25 Criticism
26 Twine
27 Guitarist — Clapton
28 Window ledge
30 Break down
32 Flamenco shout
34 Smell bad
35 Han or Ming
37 Flowering shrub
38 Lemon or clunker
40 Chewy roll
41 Fix apples
42 Wheel bolts
43 Munch
44 2007 Peace Prize winner
45 Essay name
46 Magna — laude
47 Rollover subj.
49 Sigh of delight

Answer to Previous Puzzle

B	A	R	E	■	D	O	L	L	■	A	P	T
A	L	O	E	■	U	R	A	L	■	V	E	E
G	E	A	R	■	D	E	B	A	T	E	R	S
S	T	R	I	D	E	S	■	M	O	C	K	S
■	■	A	S	E	A	■	■	S	A	D	■	■
■	■	■	R	U	B	I	K	■	D	O	O	M
A	M	P	■	B	O	C	A	■	Y	O	R	E
D	E	A	R	■	R	O	T	E	■	P	A	L
Z	A	N	E	■	I	N	E	R	T	■	■	■
■	■	■	R	O	C	■	■	O	A	T	H	■
B	O	G	U	S	■	D	E	S	I	R	E	S
L	A	U	N	C	H	E	S	■	W	I	R	E
A	H	A	■	A	B	E	T	■	A	B	B	A
B	U	M	■	R	O	S	E	■	N	E	S	T

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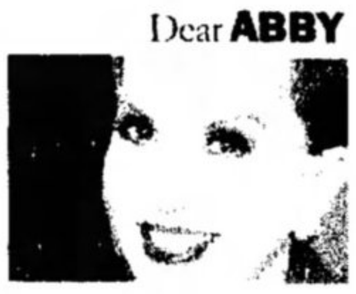
Woman's good fortune is reason to pay it forward

Dear **ABBY**



DEAR ABBY: I am one of your faithful readers and have personally related to some of the problems that appear in your column. I have been particularly moved by letters in which people share their personal experiences regarding acts of kindness.

As a foster child, I was lucky to have been placed in a secure and loving home. I try each and every day to pass on the love that I have received (from both my biological family and my extended one) to the people I meet. It can be a gesture as simple as helping to carry someone's groceries to the car, or offering a ride to a mother with small children whose car has broken down or a parent pushing a stroller in the rain.

I hope I will be able to teach this trait to my children. I would like them to help others because it is the right thing to do, not because there is a benefit to be reaped.

So please, fellow readers, pay it forward. Help others not only because it feels good, but also teaches our kids that being a good person is its own reward. — **ANDI IN ATLANTA**

DEAR ANDI: Thank you for an "upper" of a letter. I am certain that you will pass along to your children the lesson of selfless giving because children learn by example. And lucky they are to have a parent like you.

DEAR ABBY: When is it OK to correct the mispronunciation of a word? I need to, but I'm not sure how to go about it.

My husband, "Rob," is an intelligent and educated man, but he has no idea how to pronounce some words that he uses on a daily basis.

Most of these words pertain to Rob's hobby, which is salt-water aquariums, and I'm afraid his credibility is taking a beating because of it. He talks about his tank a lot. Rob knows what he's talking about, but he doesn't know how to say it. Should I say something to him? — **TREADING WATER IN HAWAII**

DEAR TREADING: It is no more "snobbish" to say to one's mate, "Honey, I love you, but you're mispronouncing that word," than to tell him that his zipper is open. It shows that you care. When you mention it, do it in private, and be sure to have a dictionary close by. After that, what he chooses to do about it is his choice.

DEAR ABBY: I was married in November, and one of my co-workers, "Brooke," attended the ceremony. Her gift to me was a vase. When we opened the box, my husband and I discovered that the vase was engraved with Brooke's and her husband's names and their wedding date. Tucked inside the vase was a card from the couple who had given it to them for their wedding.

How should I handle this? Should I return the vase to her, or ignore it and give it to Goodwill? — **JENNIFER IN PORT ORCHARD, WASH.**

DEAR JENNIFER: Neither. Remove the card, rewrap the gift, and give it to Brooke on her next anniversary.

DEAR ABBY: I'm 13 and have a problem. My mom's stepdad just passed away. My problem is I'm not sad. I mean, I knew him well enough -- but I'm not SAD. My mom cried, but I didn't. Is there something wrong with me? -- **PROBLEM IN PENNSYLVANIA**

DEAR P.I.P.: There is nothing wrong with you. Every person grieves in his or her own way. It's possible that your mother's stepdad occupied a larger place in her life than he did in yours. Therefore, the empty space his passing has left is greater for her than for you. You're normal, so stop worrying.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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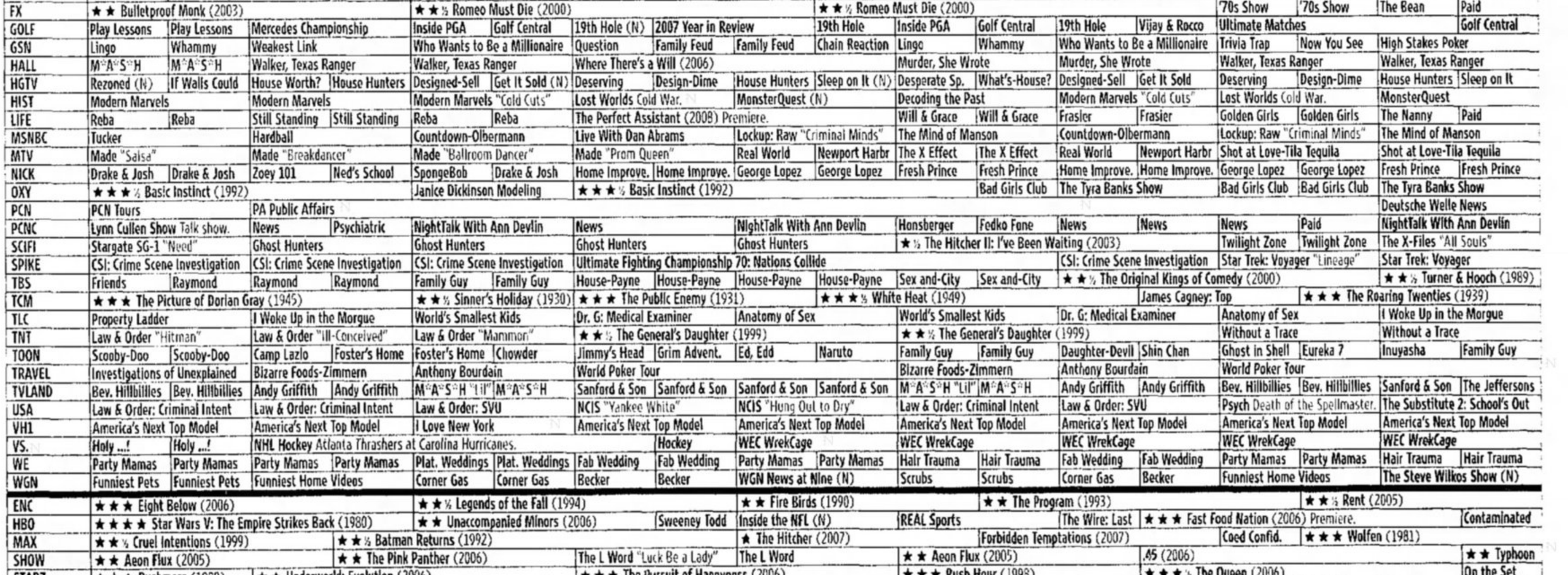
WEDNESDAY EVENING

MOVIES | TALK | NEWS | KIDS | SPORTS

JAN. 2, 2008

	6PM	6:30	7PM	7:30	8PM	8:30	9PM	9:30	10PM	10:30	11PM	11:30	12AM	12:30	1AM	1:30	2AM	2:30
CBS (2) KDKA (7) WTRF (10) WTAJ	News (N)	(7) (10) CBS Evening News With Katie Couric (N)	(2) CBS Evening News-Couric/ (7) Entertainment/ (10) Inside	(2) The Insider (N)/ (7) Inside Edition/ (10) Two and a Half Men	Power of 10 Contestants compete to win cash. (Season Premiere) (N)		Criminal Minds "Profiler, Profiled" The BAU team must delve into Morgan's past when he is arrested for murder.		CSI: NY "Oedipus Hex" A teen who dreams of becoming a SuicideGirl is murdered.		News (N)	Late Show With David Letterman		The Late Late Show With Craig Ferguson		(2) Extra/ (7) The Insider/ (10) Everybody Loves Raymond "Just a Formality"	(2) (10) Paid/ (7) That '70s Show Donna's wedding dress.	(2) Paid/ (7) (10) CBS Up to the Minute (N)
ABC (4) WTAE (23) WATM	(4) News (N)/ (23) The Insider Tammy Faye Bakker. (N)	ABC's World News With Charles Gibson (N)	(4) Inside Edition/ (23) Jeopardy! (N)	(4) Entertainment Tonight/ (23) Wheel of Fortune	Wife Swap "Goss; Guastaferro" The mother of a pageant queen swaps places with a homeschooling feminist. (N)		Supernanny "Drake Family" The parents of three lively children get advice. (Season Premiere) (N)		Supernanny "Chapman Family" Teens deal with unhelpful parents. (N)		(4) Ch. 4 Action News at 11 (N)/ (23) News (N)	Nightline Coverage of the Iowa caucuses. (N)	Jimmy Kimmel Live (N)	(4) Oprah Winfrey/ (23) Paid		(23) Paid	(4) Paid/ (23) Jerry Springer	(4) Ch. 4 Action News at 11
NBC (6) WJAC (9) WTOV (11) WPXI	News (N)	NBC Nightly News (N)	(6) Entertainment Tonight Dancing road show. (N)/ (9) (11) Jeopardy! (N)	(6) Who Wants to Be a Millionaire/ (9) (11) Wheel of Fortune "Great Outdoors" (N)	Deal or No Deal Sept. 11 World Trade Center attack survivor Will Jimeno. (N)		Law & Order "Called Home; Darkness" Detective Lupo deals with trouble at home. (Season Premiere) (N)				News (N)	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno (N)		Late Night With Conan O'Brien (N)		Last Call With Carson Daly	Poker After Dark Players include Daniel Negreanu, Phil Hellmuth, Jennifer Harman, Mike Matusow, Scotty Nguyen and Ken Light. (N)	
FOX (8) WWCP (53) WPGH	(8) The Simpsons/ (53) Two and a Half Men	(8) That '70s Show/ (53) Frasier	(8) Seinfeld/ (53) Two and a Half Men	College Football Pregame	College Football Tostitos Fiesta Bowl — Oklahoma vs. West Virginia. From Glendale, Ariz.								College Football Postgame	(8) News/ (53) Paid	(8) Seinfeld/ (53) Paid	(8) Frasier/ (53) Paid	(8) Paid/ (53) Sex and the City "Luck Be an Old Lady"	(8) Space Age Sleeping/ (53) Cheaters
(13) WQED	The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer (N)		Nightly Business Report	On Q	Pioneers of Television "Sitcoms" (N)		Andrew Jackson: Good, Evil and the Presidency Martin Sheen narrates a biography of Andrew Jackson. (N)				Charlie Rose Preview of the Iowa Caucus. (N)		On Q	Tavis Smiley Will Smith.	Great Performances Georges Prêtre conducts Vienna Philharmonic at Musikverein. (N)			Words and Music by Jerry
(19) WPCW	The People's Court		Everybody-Raymond	Everybody-Raymond	Crowned: The Mother of All Pageants (N)		Gossip Girl "School Lies" A night of fun almost turns tragic.		The 10 O'Clock News	The Nightly Sports Call	Malcolm in the Middle	According to Jim	That '70s Show	King of the Hill "Cheer Factor"	South Park "Asspen"	Mike Tomlin Show '07-'08	Paid	Paid
(22) WPMY	The Simpsons	Family Guy	The Simpsons	Family Guy	Whacked Out	Whacked Out	Celebrity Daredevils		TMZ (N)	Frasier	Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Paid	Paid	Bernie Mac	My Wife-Kids	Half & Half	Half & Half
(40) WPCB	The 700 Club		Focus 4		Today God	Heritage	Joel Osteen	Aspiring Womn	With Arlene	Quick Study	CBN News	Richard and Lindsay Roberts		7th St. Theater	Focus 4		This Is Day	Laverne Tripp
(59) WBGN	Temptation	Temptation	Degrassi: Next	Reno 911!	The Nanny	Mad Abt. You	Stone Undercover		Cold Squad		Reno 911!	Blind Date	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid
A&E	Cold Case Files		CSI: Miami "After the Fall"		CSI: Miami "Tinder Box"		CSI: Miami "Freaks & Tweaks"		CSI: Miami "Body Count"		CSI: Miami "Blood Brothers"		CSI: Miami "Tinder Box"		CSI: Miami "Freaks & Tweaks"		CSI: Miami "Body Count"	
ABCFAM	★ ★ Dr. Dolittle (1998)				★ ★ Dr. Dolittle (1998)				Funniest Home Videos		The 700 Club		Whose Line?	Whose Line?	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid
AMC	★ ★ ½ Mission: Impossible (1996)				★ ★ ½ Navy SEALS (1990)				★ ★ Iron Eagle (1986) A teenager embarks on a mission to rescue his father.						★ ★ ★ ½ The China Syndrome (1979)			
ANPL	The Crocodile Hunter		Almighty Amphibians		Natural World "Big Sky Bears"		The Natural World		Animal Precinct "Big Heart"		Natural World "Big Sky Bears"		The Natural World		Animal Precinct "Big Heart"		Almighty Amphibians	
BBC	Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares		BBC World	How Clean	476-Lb. Teenager		Super Skinny Me		BBC World News America		476-Lb. Teenager		Super Skinny Me		Coupling	Wrld Stand Up	The Weakest Link	
BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live (N)			Access	★ ★ The Gospel (2005)				American Gangster		Hell Date	Hell Date	Jamie Foxx	Jamie Foxx	★ ★ The Gospel (2005)			
BRAVO	Project Runway		Project Runway		Project Runway		Project Runway		Project Runway (N)		Make Me a Supermodel (N)		Project Runway		Project Runway		Project Runway	
CMT	Ult. Coyote Ugly Search		Ult. Coyote Ugly Search		Ult. Coyote Ugly Search		Ult. Coyote Ugly Search		Celebrity Bull Riding Challenge		Celebrity Bull	Celebrity Bull	Celebrity Bull	Celebrity Bull	Celebrity Bull Riding Challenge		CMT Music	
CNBC	Mad Money		Kudlow & Company		Fast Money		The Suze Orman Show		The Big Idea With Deutsch		Mad Money		The Suze Orman Show		The Big Idea With Deutsch		Paid	Paid
CNN	The Situation Room		Lou Dobbs Tonight		Out in the Open		Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360				Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360		Anderson Cooper 360	
COM	★ ½ Black Sheep (1996)		Scrubs	Scrubs	Futurama	Futurama	Futurama	South Park	South Park	Reno 911!	Com.-Presents	Com.-Presents	South Park	Kenny-Spenny	Com.-Presents	Com.-Presents	Com.-Presents	Com.-Presents
COURT	World's Wildest Police Videos		Cops	Cops	Party Heat (N)		Most Shocking (N)		Forensic Files	Forensic Files	Power, Privilege & Justice		Party Heat		Most Shocking		Forensic Files	Forensic Files
CSPAN	Iowa Campaign Events										Capital News Today						Today In Washington	
DISC	Cash Cab	Cash Cab	How It's Made	How It's Made	Sinking of an Aircraft Carrier		MythBusters		MythBusters		Dirty Jobs Vermont cheese.		Sinking of an Aircraft Carrier		MythBusters		MythBusters	
DISNEY	Wizards-Place	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	Zack & Cody	★ ★ ½ Cadet Kelly (2002)				That's-Raven	Life Derek	Zack & Cody	Han. Montana	Replacements	Kim Possible	Emperor New	American Drgn	Buzz Lightyear	Timon-Pumbaa
E!	True H'wood	Wildest Wed	E! News (N)	The Daily 10	★ ★ ★ High Fidelity (2000) Premiere.				Snoop Father	Snoop Father	E! News	Chelsea Lately	The Daily 10	Girl Next Door	Snoop Father	Snoop Father	Party Parents	Chelsea Lately
ESPN	SportsCenter		College Football Special		College Basketball Kent State at North Carolina.				Gamenight	NFL Live	SportsCenter		SportsCenter		Football Sp.	NFL Live (N)	SportsCenter	
ESPNC	Stump-Schwab	Stump-Schwab	American Gladiators		Boxing		Who's Number 1?		American Gladiators		Bull Riding PRCA Xtreme.		Boxing	Boxing	2-Minute Drill	2-Minute Drill	Cheap Seats	Arliss
ESPN2	2007 World Series of Poker		College Basketball Rutgers at South Florida.				College Basketball Penn State at Northwestern.				Gamenight	NBA Fastbreak	2007 World Series of Poker		2007 World Series of Poker		Boxing Friday Night Fights.	
EWTN	Eucharistic	Christl-Choice	Daily Mass: Our Lady		EWTN Live		Super Saints	Holy Rosary	Untold Blessings: Paths		Faith-Culture	Domestic	Daily Mass: Our Lady		EWTN Live		Domestic	Jesus Christ
FNC	Special Report		Fox Report-Shepard Smith		The O'Reilly Factor		Hannity & Colmes		On the Record-Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Hannity & Colmes		On the Record-Van Susteren		Special Report	
FOOD	Minute Meals	Minute Meals	Emeril Live (N)		Good Eats: Down & Out		Challenge "Cereal Skylines"		Dinner Imposs.	Dinner Imposs.	Good Eats	Unwrapped	Challenge "Cereal Skylines"		Dinner Imposs.	Dinner Imposs.	Good Eats	Unwrapped
FSN	Final Score	Savran on SportsBeat		WVU Bowl Pre.	Sport Science		Top 50 Plays of 2007		SportsBeat	Final Score	Top 50 Plays of 2007		Final Score	Top 50 Plays of 2007		SportsBeat	Final Score	Final Score
FX	★ ★ Bulletproof Monk (2003)				★ ★ ½ Romeo Must Die (2000)					★ ★ ½ Romeo Must Die (2000)					'70s Show	'70s Show	The Bean	Paid
GOLF	Play Lessons	Play Lessons	Mercedes Championship		Inside PGA	Golf Central	19th Hole (N)	2007 Year in Review		19th Hole	Inside PGA	Golf Central	19th Hole	Vijay & Rocco	Ultimate Matches			Golf Central
GSN	Lingo	Whammy	Weakest Link		Who Wants to Be a Millionaire		Question	Family Feud	Family Feud	Chain Reaction	Lingo	Whammy	Who Wants to Be a Millionaire		Trivia Trap	Now You See	High Stakes Poker	
HALL	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	Walker, Texas Ranger		Walker, Texas Ranger		Where There's a Will (2006)				Murder, She Wrote		Murder, She Wrote		Walker, Texas Ranger		Walker, Texas Ranger	
HGTV	Rezoned (N)	If Walls Could	House Worth?	House Hunters	Designed-Sell	Get It Sold (N)	Deserving	Design-Dime	House Hunters	Sleep on It (N)	Desperate Sp.	What's-House?	Designed-Sell	Get It Sold	Deserving	Design-Dime	House Hunters	Sleep on It
HIST	Modern Marvels		Modern Marvels		Modern Marvels "Cold Cuts"		Lost Worlds Cold War.		MonsterQuest (N)		Decoding the Past		Modern Marvels "Cold Cuts"		Lost Worlds Cold War.		MonsterQuest	
LIFE	Reba	Reba	Still Standing	Still Standing	Reba	Reba	The Perfect Assistant (2008) Premiere.				Will & Grace	Will & Grace	Frasier	Frasier	Golden Girls	Golden Girls	The Nanny	Paid
MSNBC	Tucker		Hardball		Countdown-Olbermann		Live With Dan Abrams		Lockup: Raw "Criminal Minds"		The Mind of Manson		Countdown-Olbermann		Lockup: Raw "Criminal Minds"		The Mind of Manson	
MTV	Made "Salsa"		Made "Breakdancer"		Made "Ballroom Dancer"		Made "Prom Queen"		Real World	Newport Harbr	The X Effect	The X Effect	Real World	Newport Harbr	Shot at Love-Tila Tequila		Shot at Love-Tila Tequila	
NICK	Drake & Josh	Drake & Josh	Zoey 101	Ned's School	SpongeBob	Drake & Josh	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	George Lopez	George Lopez	Fresh Prince	Fresh Prince	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	George Lopez	George Lopez	Fresh Prince	Fresh Prince
OXY	★ ★ ★ ½ Basic Instinct (1992)				Janice Dickinson Modeling		★ ★ ★ ½ Basic Instinct (1992)					Bad Girls Club	The Tyra Banks Show		Bad Girls Club	Bad Girls Club	The Tyra Banks Show	
PCN	PCN Tours		PA Public Affairs														Deutsche Welle News	
PCNC	Lynn Cullen Show Talk show.		News	Psychiatric	NightTalk With Ann Devlin		News		NightTalk With Ann Devlin		Honsberger	Fedko Fone	News	News	News	Paid	NightTalk With Ann Devlin	
SCIFI	Stargate SG-1 "Need"		Ghost Hunters		Ghost Hunters		Ghost Hunters		Ghost Hunters		★ ½ The Hitcher II: I've Been Waiting (2003)				Twilight Zone	Twilight Zone	The X-Files "All Souls"	
SPIKE	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation		Ultimate Fighting Championship 70: Nations Collide						CSI: Crime Scene Investigation		Star Trek: Voyager "Lineage"		Star Trek: Voyager	
TBS	Friends	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Family Guy	Family Guy	House-Payne	House-Payne	House-Payne	House-Payne	Sex and-City	Sex and-City	★ ★ ½ The Original Kings of Comedy (2000)				★ ★ ½ Turner & Hooch (1989)	
TCM	★ ★ ★ The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945)				★ ★ ½ Sinner's Holiday (1930)		★ ★ ★ The Public Enemy (1931)			★ ★ ★ ½ White Heat (1949)				James Cagney: Top	★ ★ ★ The Roaring Twenties (1939)			
TLC	Property Ladder		I Woke Up in the Morgue		World's Smallest Kids		Dr. G: Medical Examiner		Anatomy of Sex		World's Smallest Kids		Dr. G: Medical Examiner		Anatomy of Sex		I Woke Up in the Morgue	
TNT	Law & Order "Hitman"		Law & Order "Ill-Conceived"		Law & Order "Mammon"		★ ★ ½ The General's Daughter (1999)				★ ★ ½ The General's Daughter (1999)				Without a Trace		Without a Trace	
TOON	Scooby-Doo	Scooby-Doo	Camp Lazlo	Foster's Home	Foster's Home	Chowder	Jimmy's Head	Grim Advent.	Ed, Edd	Naruto	Family Guy	Family Guy	Daughter-Devil	Shin Chan	Ghost in Shell	Eureka 7	Inuyasha	Family Guy
TRAVEL	Investigations of Unexplained		Bizarre Foods-Zimmern		Anthony Bourdain		World Poker Tour				Bizarre Foods-Zimmern		Anthony Bourdain		World Poker Tour			
TVLAND	Bev. Hillbillies	Bev. Hillbillies	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	M*A*S*H "Lil"	M*A*S*H	Sanford & Son	Sanford & Son	Sanford & Son	Sanford & Son	M*A*S*H "Lil"	M*A*S*H	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Bev. Hillbillies	Bev. Hillbillies	Sanford & Son	The Jeffersons
USA	Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Law & Order: SVU		NCIS "Yankee White"		NCIS "Hung Out to Dry"		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Law & Order: SVU		Psych Death of the Spellmaster.		The Substitute 2: School's Out	
VH1	America's Next Top Model		America's Next Top Model		I Love New York		America's Next Top Model		America's Next Top Model		America's Next Top Model		America's Next Top Model		America's Next Top Model		America's Next Top Model	
VS.	Holy ...!	Holy ...!	NHL Hockey Atlanta Thrashers at Carolina Hurricanes.					Hockey	WEC WrekCage		WEC WrekCage		WEC WrekCage		WEC WrekCage		WEC WrekCage	
WE	Party Mamas	Party Mamas	Party Mamas	Party Mamas	Plat. Weddings	Plat. Weddings	Fab Wedding	Fab Wedding	Party Mamas	Party Mamas	Hair Trauma	Hair Trauma	Fab Wedding	Fab Wedding	Party Mamas	Party Mamas	Hair Trauma	Hair Trauma
WGN	Funniest Pets	Funniest Pets	Funniest Home Videos		Corner Gas	Corner Gas	Becker	Becker	WGN News at Nine (N)		Scrubs	Scrubs	Corner Gas	Becker	Funniest Home Videos		The Steve Wilkos Show (N)	
ENC	★ ★ ★ Eight Below (2006)				★ ★ ½ Legends of the Fall (1994)				★ ★ Fire Birds (1990)			★ ★ The Program (1993)				★ ★ ½ Rent (2005)		
HBO	★ ★ ★ ★ Star Wars V: The Empire Strikes Back (1980)				★ ★ Unaccompanied Minors (2006)			Sweeney Todd	Inside the NFL (N)		REAL Sports		The Wire: Last	★ ★ ★ Fast Food Nation (2006) Premiere.				Contaminated
MAX	★ ★ ½ Cruel Intentions (1999)		★ ★ ½ Batman Returns (1992)						★ The Hitcher (2007)			Forbidden Temptations (2007)			Coed Confid.	★ ★ ★ Wolfen (1981)		
SHOW	★ ★ Aeon Flux (2005)		★ ★ The Pink Panther (2006)				The L Word "Luck Be a Lady"		The L Word		★ ★ Aeon Flux (2005)			.45 (2006)			★ ★ Typhoon	
STARZ	★ ★ ★ Rushmore (1998)		★ ★ Underworld: Evolution (2006)				★ ★ ★ The Pursuit of Happyness (2006)				★ ★ ★ Rush Hour (1998)			★ ★ ★ ½ The Queen (2006)			On the Set	
TMC	★ ★ ½ Happy Endings (2005)				★ ★ Art School Confidential (2006) Premiere.				★ ½ National Lampoon's Barely Legal (2005)		★ ½ Shadowboxer (2005)				★ ★ ½ Park (2006)		Happy Endings	



FEATURES

Ringling leading district

Charles Ringling, 58, of Venetia, was elected commander of American Legion Department of Pennsylvania's 25th District.

Ringling

The District comprises 30 posts in Washington and Greene counties.

Ringling served in the U.S. Navy from July 1968 to July 1972.

He has been a member of Post 613 in Finleyville for 30 years.

"As the new 25th District commander, I look forward to working with staff members, posts and the more than 8,000 members of the district in the coming months," he said.

"Membership is a major program. We also have many programs – veteran's, community service, children and youth, scouting, scholarship, and others – we need to improve and promote."

Ringling said the organization is made of "veterans still serving America."

"We're American Legion," he said.

"We can make a difference. We will make a difference."

Daley obtains two grants

State Rep. Peter J. Daley, D-California, obtained a $5,000 grant for the Mid-Mon Valley Shipmates.

Much of the money will be used to purchase uniforms, equipment and American flags.

"He took our grant application by the horns and continued to follow up until we received it," Commander Joe Acton said of Dailey. "We needed the new uniforms to look our best."

Daley obtained a $10,000 grant for the Monongahela Area Library.

Library Director Ed Shanahan said the money will be used to offset the cost of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning unit.

IOOF Lodge 1030 installs officers

Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge 1030 in Charleroi has installed the following officers for 2007-2008:

Noble Grand David R. Metz, Vice Grand Robert Grant, Financial Secretary Joseph Marshall; Recording Secretary Leonard Santini and Treasurer John Rebar.

The lodge was chartered in 1891.

SERVICE NEWS

Ahlin joins U.S. Navy

Heather L. Ahlin has enlisted in the U.S. Navy under the delayed entry program.

She will undergo basic training at the Recruit Training Center, Great Lakes, Ill.

A 2006 California Area High School graduate, she is the daughter of Doreen L. and James W. Ahlin, of Coal Center.

Amoroso joins U.S. Navy

Nicholas W. Amoroso has enlisted in the U.S. Navy under the delayed entry program.

He will undergo basic training at the Recruit Training Center, Great Lakes, Ill.

A Monessen High School senior, he is the son of Barbara Amoroso and William R. Amoroso, both of Monessen.

Craigmiles joins Navy

Michelle C. Craigmiles has enlisted in the U.S. Navy under the delayed entry program.

She will undergo basic training at the Recruit Training Center, Great Lakes, Ill.

She is the daughter of Mary Jane M. Crackovich, of Venetia.

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1079387

VALLEY CLUB NOTES

First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association Branch 88

Dec. 2 was the day members of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association Branch 88, of Monessen, were treated to a holiday luncheon at the Holiday Inn Belle Vernon. Members were greeted by co-chairwoman, Marilyn Chuprinko who presented them with meal reservations. They also received favors supplied by the branch and the home office. Each member also received a loaf of Benedictine bread, a gift from the branch.

Members were welcomed by President Dorothy Urbanowicz, who introduced the Rev. Ronald Cyktor who gave the invocation preceding dinner. Following dinner Urbanowicz introduced ventriloquist, Cindy Speck who entertained the group. The Rev. Justin Matro then presented prayer petitions.

A brief meeting followed and Urbanowicz introduced members, Margaret and Michael Smida, who recently were rescued from a smoke-filled home in Carroll Township. She also recognized 50-year award members: Vera Baka, Ronald Chomko and Marsha Higgins. Urbanowicz noted the "Join Hands Projects" that the branch participated in this past year. The branch had five scholarship winners this year and it was noted that applications are available for next year's scholarships. They must be returned to the home office by March 1. A total of $249,500 will be awarded in scholarships. It was also noted that at the recent National Convention in St. Louis, the following received donations: St. Sebastian Church, Belle Vernon, $15,000; St. John Evangelist, Connellsville, $20,000; Rendu Services, Dunbar, $6,500; St. Dismas Prison Ministry, $3,000; Greater Monessen Historical Society, $5,000; St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, $75,000; and Vincentian Sisters of Charity, Pittsburgh, $30,000.

Door prize drawing was held with the following being winners: Rom Oslick, Bob Funtal, Alethea Bennett, Mary Cope, Dorothy Urbanowicz, Lillian Plavko, Dolly Gaudio, John Dudas, Florence Prah, Robin Betza, Steve Betza, Rebecca Barclay, Elizabeth Kaminicky, Katherine Hynek, Paul Ciccarelli, Jim Barron, Barbara Felak, Cyktor, Michele Petrusky; JoAnn Kubin, Mike Smida, Agnes Rusilko, Rosemary Betza, Marilyn Chuprinko, Agnes Mahalko, Norma Morris, Marilyn Pivarnik, Patty Pettko, Veronica Bellicni, Chuck Urbanowicz, Robert Betza, Alana Pike, JoAnn Wiggins, Bob Betza, John Onda, Madeline Barron, Harry Cope, Ken Betza, Eleanor Musial, Ella Kowalsky, Flora Funtal, Ted Harhai, Veronica Petrucsky, Elmer Andrachek, Domonick Galalie, Louise Dudas, Matro, Rob Betza, John Andrachick, Millie Sabolchak, Margaret McKita, Mary Ralston, Anthony Bellicini, Ange Caporossi, Alice Bialon, Mike Martin and Linda Oslick.

Urbanowicz thanked all for attending and Matro closed the afternoon with benediction.

Mon Valley Slovak Cultural Society

President John Dudas welcomed the members of the Mon Valley Slovak Cultural Society to the Christmas party Dec. 8 at the Monessen Elks Lodge 773.

John Billy offered the invocation.

After dinner a short meeting was held. Jeri Drake resigned as vice president and was replaced by Vivian Weir. Mary Smith is the new sunshine lady replacing Agnes Gaydos, who is ill.

Members sang Christmas carols in English and Slovak accompanied at the piano by James Berna.

Many door prizes were awarded, including the poinsettias adorning each table.

Responsible for the dinner meeting were Rosemary Betza and Mary Ralston.

Michael Martin gave the benediction.

There will no meetings in January or February.

The next meeting will be held March 24.

ODDS & ENDS

Hundreds brave cold waters in swimming tradition for charity

NEW YORK (AP) — Hundreds of hardy swimmers braved the 42-degree Atlantic Ocean on Tuesday for a traditional New Year's Day dip.

"It was a fantastic day," said Louis Scarcella, president of the Coney Island Polar Bears Club.

About 300 club members went in the water off Coney Island, raising $30,000 in pledges for Camp Sunshine, a camp for seriously ill children and their families in Casco, Maine, Scarcella said.

Another two dozen members of the Ice Breakers took a dip off nearby Brighton Beach, member Bob Stewart said.

"The cold water clears our minds and bodies so we can experience the new year in a more fresh and relaxed way," he said.

Fast-food worker returns $185,000 check he found

NORWICH, Conn. (AP) — Reggie Damone just wanted to jot down a phone number when he picked up what he thought was litter on a sidewalk this week. But what he found was an envelope containing a $185,000 check.

Damone, who receives food stamps and works at McDonald's, said he didn't think twice about trying to cash it. Instead, the 47-year-old took a bus Monday from his Jewett City home to a bank and returned the check to the niece of the landlord to whom the check was written.

She thanked Damone with a $50 bill.

Damone said that although he knew $185,000 could pay his rent and other bills for a long time, he was never tempted to try to cash it and splurge.

He says he remembered his mother's words: If you take something, you lose three times that amount — and if you do something good, something good comes back to you.

Four compete in contest for world's greatest couch potato

NEW YORK (AP) — On your mark. Get set. Watch!

For many sports fans, New Year's Day means lounging around the living room and watching college football with a bag of potato chips.

Four people began putting their laziness to the test Tuesday in the ESPN Zone Ultimate Couch Potato Competition, which kicked off at the ESPN Zone restaurant in Times Square.

The participants, sitting in recliners in front of a dozen 42-inch high-definition plasma televisions and a couple of 14-foot HD projection TVs, will try to watch the most continuous hours of televised sports. They can order unlimited food and drinks, but can't sleep or leave their recliners except for restroom breaks once every eight hours.

They'll be shooting for the Guinness World Records mark for watching televised sports — 69 hours and 48 minutes straight, ESPN Zone said.

"The participants will basically be competing at doing nothing," ESPN Zone regional marketing manager Susan Abramson said in a statement. "But it'll take extraordinary mental and physical stamina to endure the conditions of watching TV for that long."

The contest kicked off at 11 a.m., and all four were going strong by late Tuesday afternoon, an event spokesman said.

To get into the competition, contestants had to write 200-word essays describing why they had what it took to mash the competition and be the ultimate couch potato.

The winner will receive a prize package worth $5,000 that includes — you guessed it — a high-definition TV and a cozy recliner.

Senate candidate goes to great heights for attention

ATLANTA (AP) — A television reporter turned political candidate said he plans to remain on a small scaffold near the top of a tower to focus attention on his long-shot bid to unseat a U.S. senator.

Dale Cardwell was hoisted more than 300 feet up the Corey Tower near downtown Atlanta on Tuesday morning. He said he expects to remain there "for days," sleeping in an insulated sleeping bag and eating military rations.

A Webcam tracks his limited movements. Overnight temperatures are expected to drop into the 20s.

Cardwell, who hopes to unseat Republican Saxby Chambliss, said he thinks the publicity stunt won't hurt his credibility, but will make people curious about his message: that politicians should pay more attention to the concerns of working people and less to those of wealthy corporate interests.

Cardwell faces DeKalb County chief executive Vernon Jones in the Democratic primary July 15.

MARRIAGE LICENSE APPLICATIONS

The following obtained marriage licences through the Westmoreland County Register of Wills:

■ Anthony Paul Garofalo and Lory Ann Chalfant, both of Belle Vernon.

■ Christopher James Livingston and Maria Lynn Bella, both of Jacobs Creek.

■ Tony Harold Nahas and Suzanne Louise Fine, both of Belle Vernon.

■ Robert David Stevens, of Perryopolis, and Rebecca Lynne Thoma, of Herminie.

■ Brian Stephen Morgan and Denise Michelle Payne, both of Elizabeth.

■ Jonathan Michael Mayernik, of Monessen, and Marie Susan Collins, of St. Albans, Hertfordshire, United Kingdom.

■ Arthur David McLaughlin and Jessica Leigh Toth, both of West Newton.

■ Keith Alan Coltura and Emily Suzanne Megela, both of West Newton.

■ Keith Aaron Cushenberry and Nicole Rae Scirotto, both of Monessen.

■ Lawrence Roberts Howell Jr. and Holly Jane Snyder, both of West Newton.

■ Jack Reid Ragsdale Jr. and Bobbie Lorraine Pastor, both of Herminie.

■ Peter Joseph Aiello and Alicia Ann Tomasits, both of Belle Vernon.

■ Michael Charles Hummel and Ashley Marie Raczkowski, both of West Newton.

■ Mark Anthony DeMaglio and Pamela Jean Haines, both of West Newton.

■ Greg Paul Marinkovich, of Monongahela, and Susan Denise Capehart, of Greensburg.

■ Brandon David Cox and Alison Mary Davis, both of West Newton.

■ Anthony Neal Vigliotti and Kristin Jo Mendola, both of Monessen.

■ Kirk Richard Smith and Rebecca Lee Lash, both of West Newton.

■ Michael Alan Horvat and Suzette Marie Ponzetti, both of West Newton.

■ Dallas Ray Streets and Nicole Ann Lint, both of Herminie.

■ Bernard Ronald Bandini, of Dunlevy, and Susan Kay McFarland, of Greensburg.

CALENDAR WATCH

Thursday

■Overeaters Anonymous meeting, Mon Valley Community Health Center, Monessen, 7:30 p.m.

■Southwestern Local Task Force meeting, Intermediate Unit 1 Central Office, Coal Center, 7 p.m.

www.valleyindependent.com

CELEBRITY CIPHER

by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

Today's clue: I equals F

"TPHHPL TD IRL DXN AZXNFK IXLUPH RMK ABEFP / HZRM HZRH DXN AZXNFK LPBPBTPL RMK TP ARK." - OZLEAHEMR LXAAPHHE

PREVIOUS SOLUTION — "Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each new year find you a better man." - Ben Franklin

EASTGATE 19, MONESSEN, PA 15062
MONDAY-FRIDAY 8:30AM-5:00PM

Valley INDEPENDENT

TRIB TOTAL MEDIA

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VALLEYINDEPENDENT.COM 724.684.5200 FAX: 724.684.2602

RECRUITMENT
DAILY: 1:30PM, Day Prior
MONDAY: 4:30PM, Friday
SUNDAY: 11AM, Wednesday

LEGALS
DAILY: NOON, 2 Weekdays Prior To Publication
SUNDAY: 11AM, Wednesday

MERCHANDISE
4 LINES • 4 DAYS
$14.30 PRE-PAY
DAILY: 1:30PM, Day Prior
MONDAY: 4:30PM, Friday
SUNDAY: 11AM, Wednesday

GARAGE SALES
5 LINES • 3 DAYS
$18.65
DAILY: 1:30PM, Day Prior
MONDAY: 4:30PM, Friday
SUNDAY: 11AM, Wednesday

SERVICE DIRECTORY
3 LINES • 30 DAYS
$59.77 PRE-PAY
DAILY: 1:30PM, Day Prior
MONDAY: 4:30PM, Friday
SUNDAY: 11AM, Wednesday

AUTOMOTIVE
4 LINES • 26 DAYS
$34.78 PRE-PAY PRIVATE PARTY ONLY
DAILY: 1:30PM, Day Prior
MONDAY: 4:30PM, Friday
SUNDAY: 11AM, Wednesday

RUN UNTIL IT SELLS!
4 LINES
PRIVATE PARTY MERCHANDISE ONLY. NO BUSINESSES, AUTOS, BOATS, RV'S, REAL ESTATE, MOBILE HOMES OR APARTMENTS.
ASKING PRICE OF ITEM IS REDUCED EVERY TWO WEEKS BY 5%
$19.45 PRE-PAY
DAILY: 1:30PM, Day Prior
MONDAY: 4:30PM, Friday
SUNDAY: 11AM, Wednesday

PRE-PAY WITH VISA MasterCard

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1000/GENERAL

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- Steady Part-time, approx. 30 hrs./wk.
- Early morning hours
- Delivery & customer service skills necessary
- Work Independently
- Competitive wage & auto allowance

If interested, call Ken Planinsek at
724-850-2826
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1000/GENERAL

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS
Construction workers needed in Mon Valley. Assisting with building decks. Must have nail gun, staple gun & tape measure exp. Blueprints a plus.
gs
M-F 9am-4pm
1-800-485-6502 EOE

DOWN ROUTE DRIVER
Part-time position, approximately 25 hrs./week. Assist district managers with the delivery of newspapers to subscribers on routes that temporarily have no carrier. Must possess valid PA driver's license and reliable vehicle. Hourly rate plus mileage. Applications available at The Valley Independent, Eastgate 19, Monessen, PA 15062 or email your resume to lhutchison@tribweb.com

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1000/GENERAL

EXPERIENCED AUTO BODY TECHNICIAN or PAINTER
Full-time
Call 724-239-4500

FOSTER FAMILIES wanted who will open their hearts and homes to foster children of all ages. Reimbursement, support and training provided. Call 1-800-747-3807.

INSTRUCTOR
Laurel Business Institute is seeking a part-time Instructor to teach allied health classes Monday through Friday mornings. RN and teaching experience preferred. Send resume & salary requirements to: csantore@laurel.edu or mail to LBI HR, P.O. Box 877, Uniontown, PA 15401.

JANITORIAL- 4 days, 7am-10am, $9/hr. Call 1-800-686-6424 ext. 35 leave name & phone number.

LABORERS
Laborers needed in the Mon Valley!! Ability to work in a fast paced environment. Forklift exp. a +. 4pm-2am shift. HI LIFT OPERATORS also needed.
gs
M-F 9am-4pm
1-800-485-6502 EOE

MH/MR Support Staff
Laurel Highlands Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization that supports persons with MH/MR developmental disabilities, is currently seeking part-time and full-time support staff to work in our community homes in the West Newton, Turkeytown Rd., New Stanton, and Elizabeth areas. No experience is necessary. Paid training. Must be at least 18 years of age and have valid PA driver's license. Starting rate is $8.63/hour with benefits after 90 days, increase to $8.86/hr. after 6 months. EOE. Call ONLY Mon.-Fri., 9-3pm. 412-825-9141.

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Fallowfield Twp.

- Mon.-Sat.
- 69 Customers
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- 1½ hours daily

724-684-2647

NOTICE TO READERS:
While work-at-home and other informational advertising is often legitimate, we advise readers to fully investigate the background of any company before paying a fee. If an offer sounds "too good to be true", it probably is. Proceed with caution if you are asked to send money or in calling 900 numbers. All phone numbers prefixed by "900" are charged to the caller on a per minute or per call basis. The Valley Independent makes every effort to qualify these charges for the reader. Remember, if you have any doubts, investigate!

NOW HIRING PART-TIME COOK
Apply In Person
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BELLE VERNON
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WAITER/WAITRESS- Jem Lounge, Fallowfield Twp. Monday thru Friday, 11am-4pm. Call 724-483-5367.

1025/DRIVERS

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Class A & B Drivers
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Competitive Wage & Benefit Package
Also Needed
CLASS C LABORERS
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LOOKING FOR LOVE? CHECK OUT MEETING PLACE. CLASSIFIEDS WORK! TRIB TOTAL MEDIA

1025/DRIVERS

LIFT VAN DRIVERS & Taxi Drivers. Must have clean drivers license. Apply at Tri County Access, 1001 Meldon Ave., Donora.

1040/MEDICAL

AGENCY attendant needed for Belle Vernon area for personal care services. PT, morning hrs., weekdays & weekends. Interested parties should contact 724-439-1434 Mon.-Fri., 8:30am-4:30pm.

CNA
Full/Part-time
Mon Valley Care Center accepting CNA applications for daylight, afternoon, and midnight shifts. Competitive salary, insurance benefits, vacation/ holiday package, and 401K.

Join the Valley's most dynamic nursing team

Visit or
Send Resumes to:
Mon Valley Care Center
200 Stoops Drive
Monongahela, PA 15063
or fax to:
724-310-1195
E.O.E.

DENTAL ASSISTANT- PT/FT. Experience/ X-Ray certification required. Mail resumes to P.O. Box 762, Belle Vernon, PA 15012.

DENTAL ASSISTANT- PT needed for general dentist. Experience preferred. Please call 724-348-7613.

OFFICE HELP for local physician's office, part-time may lead to full-time. Front & back office experience a plus. Reply to Box 833 c/o The Valley Independent Eastgate 19, Monessen, PA 15062.

SECRETARY/Medical Assistant, full-time, for busy medical office in Belle Vernon. Front & back office exp. 401K. Send resume to P.O. Box 660, Belle Vernon, PA 15012-0660.

1050/SALES

OUTSIDE SALES REPS
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Flexible Hours
Excellent Income Potential

We are looking for aggressive, results-oriented salespeople to join our team to market Home Delivery of
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8am-3pm Tues. & Wed.
8am-12 Thursday
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DONORA ROUTE OPEN
100's McKean and Thompson
17 Papers
Call Melissa at
724-684-2647

MONESSEN
Routes Open
1st, 2nd, Reed Ave.
21 Papers
No Collecting
Call 724-684-2648

Forest, Ontario
17 Papers
No Collecting
Call 724-684-2647

MONESSEN CARRIER WANTED
1st St. 400's
2nd St. 400's
10's-200's Reed Ave.
21 Customers
No Collections
Call 724-684-2648
or 724-684-2600

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LOOKING FOR ADVENTURE? CHECK OUTDOOR ADVENTURES. CLASSIFIEDS WORK! TRIB TOTAL MEDIA

1110/BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

MONESSEN ROUTES OPEN
Frye, McGeary, Page St., Scott Ave.
17 Papers
Anna Ave., Moffat, Pride, Ross St.
18 Papers
Washington Dr., Anderson, Hartung, Service Lane
28 Papers
No Collecting
Call Melissa at 724-684-2647

ROUTES AVAILABLE
Tribune Review
✓ California
✓ Bentleyville
✓ Ellsworth Area
Call Jason at
724-272-4437 or
Bill at 412-523-2306

1120/SITUATIONS

WILL BABYSIT in my home Call 724-483-4762

2010/ESTATE NOTICES

Blatnik, Michaela R.
ESTATE NOTICE

ESTATE OF MICHAELA R. BLATNIK, A/K/A MICHAELA ROSE BLATNIK, DECEASED. Late of the Borough of Charleroi, Washington County, Pennsylvania.

Letters Testamentary on the above Estate having been granted to the undersigned, notice is hereby given to those indebted thereto to make immediate payment and to those having claims or demands to present them for settlement.

Therese M. Sherwood
596 Pringle Road
Smithfield, PA 15478

Executrix

Bradley M. Bassi, Esquire

BASSI, MCCUNE & VREELAND, P.C.
P.O. Box 144
111 FALLOWFIELD AVENUE
Charleroi, PA 15022
12/19,26;1/2

Cervi, Albert J.
ESTATE NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Register of Wills has granted Letters Testamentary to the person named below, in the Estate of ALBERT J. CERVI, late of Charleroi, Washington County, Pennsylvania. All persons having claims or demands against said Estate are requested to present the same without delay. All persons indebted to said Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the Executrix or her attorney named below.

Executrix
Bertha Marshall
12 Hartung Court
Monessen, PA 15062

Attorney
SHIRE LAW FIRM
1295 Grand Boulevard
Suite 103, Grand Plaza
Monessen, PA 15062
12/19,26,1/2

1040/MEDICAL

REGISTERED NURSE SUPERVISOR
Long-term care facility accepting *applications for FT/PT all shifts.*
Competitive starting wage, insurance benefits, 401K & vacation/holiday package.
Convenient location (off Routes 43 & 88).
For more information call 724-310-1111.
Send resume to:
MON VALLEY CARE CENTER
200 STOOPS DRIVE
MONONGAHELA, PA 15063
OR VISIT US AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS
EOE

2030/MEETING NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE
2008 MEETING DATES

The Belle Vernon Area School District Board of Education has established dates, times and sites for monthly meetings in calendar year 2008. AGENDA MEETINGS will be held at 7:00 p.m. and REGULAR MEETINGS will be held at 8:00 p.m., prevailing time, on the third Monday of each month, as listed below. Meeting sites are subject to change, pending availability of facilities.

Monday, January 21, 2008
Bellmar Middle School

Monday, February 18, 2008
District Administration Office

Monday, March 17, 2008
Bellmar Middle School

Monday, April 21, 2008
District Administration Office

Monday, May 19, 2008
Bellmar Middle School

Monday, June 16, 2008
District Administration Office

Monday, July 21, 2008
Bellmar Middle School

Monday, August 18, 2008
District Administration Office

Monday, September 15, 2008
Bellmar Middle School

Monday, October 20, 2008
District Administration Office

Monday, November 17, 2008
Bellmar Middle School

Monday, December 15, 2008
District Administration Office

All committee meetings, special meetings, and the annual reorganization meeting shall be scheduled at the discretion of the Board in compliance with requirements of the Sunshine Act.

JAMES M. McKEVITT
Board Secretary
1/2

2060/GOVERNMENT NOTICES

NOTICE OF HEARING
ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP
ZONING HEARING BOARD
TO: CITIZENS OF ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP

THE ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP ZONING HEARING BOARD WILL HOLD A PUBLIC MEETING AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 201 MUNICIPAL DRIVE, BELLE VERNON, PENNSYLVANIA 15012 ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2008 AT 6:30 P.M. TO HEAR THE FOLLOWING CASES:

1. James W. Campana, 213 Joey Lane, Baxley, GA 31513 is requesting a Special Exception and a Variance for non-conforming use. The applicants' proposed use is a machine shop and offices. The property is located at 105 Emerald Lane and is presently zoned A-1.

2. Westmoreland Waste, LLC, 111 Conner Lane, Belle Vernon, PA 15012 is requesting a Special Exception. The applicants' proposed use is to conduct blasting operations. The property is located at 111 Conner Lane and is presently zoned I-2.

All parties interested or wishing to be heard are invited to attend.

**NOTE: The applicant(s)/their representative MUST ATTEND this hearing in order to action to be taken on the request.

John Bedell, Secretary
Rostraver Township
Zoning Hearing Board
Municipal Building
201 Port Royal Road
Belle Vernon
Pennsylvania 15012
12/26,1/2

4000/ADOPTION

ADOPT
Family focused devoted married couple longs to adopt your newborn. We promise to provide a loving, warm, financially secure home. Expenses paid. Please Call Christina & Bill at
1-888-290-9050

4010/CEMETERY LOTS

4 PLOTS at Mon Valley Memorial Park, Garden of Devotion. $2,330. Call 724-929-5911.

4070/LOST & FOUND

FIND SOMETHING? LOSE SOMETHING? Place your lost & found ad FREE. Runs 4 days at no charge. Call 724-684-5200

2030/MEETING NOTICES

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the members of the Charleroi Financial MHC, Charleroi, Pennsylvania will be held at 3:00 p.m., January 16, 2008 at the principal office of Charleroi Financial MHC, 101 McKean Avenue, Charleroi, Pennsylvania. The Meeting is for the purpose of electing three directors of Charleroi Financial MHC.

Robert S. Erdely
Vice President Finance
Secretary-Treasurer
1/2, 9

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4100/PERSONALS

$195 DIVORCE COMPLETE
No-Fault Uncontested
Reisman & Davis, Pgh
-No Court Appearance or Travel To Office
-Free Information
1-800-486-4070 24Hrs

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AT BREAKFAST IN YOUR RECLINER AT YOUR MOUSE IN YOUR CAR EVERYWHERE YOU ARE WHEN NEWS IS HAPPENING TRIB TOTAL MEDIA

4100/PERSONALS

ALONE & PREGNANT?
A Confidential Caring Friend
Free Pregnancy Test
LIFELINE OF S.W. PA
Call Hotline 24 Hrs
724-489-9020

5000/APPAREL & JEWELRY

HARLEY DAVIDSON leather & wool jacket XL, excellent condition, $150. 724-872-0151.

5010/APPLIANCES

MICROWAVE Roper under the cabinet, black, like new. $63.00. 724-684-4596.

5020/ARTICLES

3' CHRISTMAS TREE- new unopened. $2.00. Call 724-483-2187.

COMPUTER DESK with hutch. You dismantle & haul. $35. Call 724-243-3635.

LAMP- 1950's bark cloth shade, $35. Call 724-483-2187.

SPINNER GO ROUND- Little Tikes, 2 person. Needs cleaned. $15. Call 724-938-6816.

V SMILE- 2 controllers, AC adaptor. $20. Call 724-684-3477.

5060/COMPUTERS

DELL Dimension, 17" monitor, keyboard, mouse, speakers. $325. 724-344-7069.

5070/ELECTRONICS

STEREO- 1960's wood cabinet, Magnavox. $20. Call 724-483-2187.

5150/HOME HEALTH CARE

LIFT CHAIR- 3 years old, hunter green, excellent. Paid $600, sell $335. 724-929-4963.

5195/SPORTING GOODS

GOLF CLUBS- Power Built new, never used w/bag, $313.00. 724-483-6724, 412-551-4848.

SKI BOOTS- size 11 Salomon men's. $10. Call 724-379-5104.

5220/WANTED TO BUY

$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
$CASH FOR$
Broken or Unwanted Gold or Platinum
Chains, Bracelets, Rings, Etc.
Gold & Silver Coins
Diamonds & Estate Jewelry
Highest Prices Paid
THE JEWELTIQUE
724-225-1455

$ $ $ $
Collector
BUYING GOLD & SILVER COINS JEWELRY & DENTAL GOLD PLATINUM & LIONEL TRAINS
Highest Prices Paid
-- WILL TRAVEL --
724-258-4189
$ $ $ $

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5220/WANTED TO BUY

WANTED- Ham radio equipment, receivers, any condition. Call 724-326-4930.

5550/CATS

GYPSEY- 1 year torte cat, spayed, shots, very loveable. $25. Call 724-258-8380.

YOUNG CATS- spayed & neutered, 7 months, shots, litter trained. $25 ea. 724-258-8380.

5600/LOST & FOUND

LOST- toy poodle, female, cream & brown "Toolsie" 2nd & Woodland, Charleroi. 724-565-5192. Reward.

6030/TRUCKS

1990 FORD F250HD 4x4 V8, 5 speed manual. Good shape. $2,500. Call 724-326-4782.

6050/PARTS & ACCESSORIES

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4100/PERSONALS

DIRECTORY
personal care facilities

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COUNTRY CARE MANOR personal care at it's best! One level, separate Dementia Wing, all brick const., country setting, 5+ acres. Affordable.
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For Your Personal Care Facility Call the Classified Dept. at (724) 684-5200 or fax (724) 684-2602

6080/AUTOS FOR SALE

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1997 CHEVY Venture Van, V6, 4 door, many options. $2,995.

1997 CHEVY Cavalier, 4 cyl., auto. $1,495.

1998 KIA Sportage, 4 cyl., auto, 4x4. $3,995.

1997 CHEVY Blazer, V6, auto, 4x4. $2,500.

1998 FORD Explorer XLT, V6, 4 dr. $4,700.

2000 FORD Taurus SES, V6, 4 dr. $4,995.

1997 FORD Explorer, V6, AWD. $4,500.

1999 PONTIAC Grand AM SE, 2 door, 4 cyl., auto, CD player. $4,500.

1994 FORD Ranger, 4 cyl., 5 speed. $1,995.

10 to 25% Off Select Vehicles - Make Offer!
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4100/PERSONALS

ASTRO ❖ GRAPH
Bernice Bede Osol

Your Birthday
THURSDAY, JAN. 3, 2008

CAPRICORN
December 22 through January 19

Get involved in as many group involvements as you can in the year ahead, because a great number of unique benefits will come from rubbing shoulders with the right crowd. The more people you know, the more options you'll have.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) -- Because of your inclination to say one thing but mean another, events will prove to be a bit confusing to those with whom you share your day. Clarify your thinking before you speak.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) -- You're a trifle gullible right now, and someone who recognizes this will attempt to distort some facts in the hopes of manipulating you. Make no judgment calls based upon hearsay.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) -- It is a mistake to focus your worth on material considerations. The most important rewards that the world has to offer cannot be financially evaluated.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) -- Strive to deal with life realistically, especially concerning issues that pertain to your professional life or finances. Confine your thinking to what is concrete and countable.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) -- If you anticipate negative responses to matters that are personally important to you, you will do things in ways that would provoke exactly what you expect. Try to think positively.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) -- Keep others out of your confidential affairs, even close friends. Their good intentions will end up being counterproductive.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) -- Someone with whom you are closely associated will unintentionally create an embarrassing development for you unless you pick up on the warning signs and derail it. Be on your toes.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) -- In order to expedite a matter of importance to you, you will be tempted to hasten an endeavor prematurely. Sadly, this will turn out to be a classic example of "haste makes waste."

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- Usually you strive to be as considerate as possible with people you like, but you will make demands on them that they're unable to fulfill. This will create an unpleasant state of affairs. Be careful.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) -- Owing to last-minute indecisiveness on your part, you will subject yourself to unwarranted delays concerning a matter that is at its final stage. Make completion your goal, not postponement.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) -- Should you learn about some unkind things being said about you, the situation will be traced back to something unflattering you said about another. Unfortunately, we reap what we sow.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) -- You can come out ahead if you don't fall prey to taking ill-advised risks with your resources. Tune out wishful thinking or advice that comes straight from the uninformed.

REAL ESTATE

3060/FOR SALE/WASH.

CALL FOR DETAILS
3 BEDROOM brick split entry. Secluded rear deck. Well maintained. Home Warranty. Priced to sell. $179,500.
3 BEDROOM brick ranch. Walking distance to Y. Great floor plan. Call for appt. today. $139,921.
Updated Triplex with all newer mechanics including central air. Close to busline. Walking distance to town. Fully rented. $89,921.

Century 21
FRONTIER REALTY
724-348-7470

UNION TWP.
3 bedroom 2.5 bath brick ranch. Master with full bath. 2 car garage. Move in condition. $134,900.

Century 21
FRONTIER REALTY
724-228-2510

3065/FOR SALE/WMLD.

BELLE VERNON 4 bedroom, 2 bath, garage, a/c, NEW everything! $93,500. 724-309-7678.

CALL FOR DETAILS
ROSTRAVER TWP. 4 bedroom, 2 story brick and vinyl. Just listed. Bank owned. Eligible for Express Path Financing. Sold as is. This property is a steal! Call today, tomorrow will be too late! $230,000.
ROSTRAVER TWP. Beautiful residential lot in nice small plan of homes. No builder choice restrictions. Easy access to Rt. 51 and I-70. All underground utilities! Call for more details! $35,000.

Century 21
FRONTIER REALTY
724-929-2180

3065/FOR SALE/WMLD.

MONESSEN 2 bed, living room, dining room, kitchen, new furnace, roof, hot water tank. $14,000. 724-684-8191.

3066/FOR SALE/OTHER

14 Grove
Large 3 or 4 bedroom in Lynnwood. You'll love the oak kitchen, large living and dining room. Finished 3rd floor. Rear deck. 2 car garage. Many updates. $129,900.

636 Todd Farm Rd.
3 or 4 bedroom with a private master. Den, family room, hickory kitchen, ceramic, hardwood floors, garage & barn. 3+ acres. $174,000.

NORTHWOOD REALTY SERVICES
201 Associates
724-929-1370

CALL FOR DETAILS
WEST NEWTON JUST LISTED - 2 bedroom ranch has family room & nice back porch & too many extras to mention. Call for details. $86,000.
CHARLEROI: large brick house w/1st floor laundry, big rooms, private patio & back yard. $69,900.
MONESSEN: move right in this well maintained home. 4 bedrooms, nice yard & much more. $47,500.

Century 21
FRONTIER REALTY
724-483-3004

3540/APTS-RENT/FAYETTE

FAYETTE CITY 2 bedroom, all on one floor, remodeled, no pets, no exceptions. $350. Security, references. Call 8-5pm 724-736-0824.

LOOKING FOR A NEW RIDE? FIND IT HERE. CLASSIFIEDS WORK!

3555/APTS-RENT/WASHINGTON

CHARLEROI
THE NEW SMITH HOUSE
Efficiency Apartment
All Utilities Included
*** DONORA ***
1 Bedroom Bungalow
Clean
Nice Neighborhood
AND
2 Bedroom Apartment
724-746-3997

CHARLEROI 1 bedroom, ck&town, 2nd floor, no pets. All appliances & utilities inc. $560+ sec. curity. 724-244-2056.

CHARLEROI
1 & 2 bedroom apts. for rent w/intercom, wall to wall carpet, washer/dryer. $375-$400. Security deposit. No pets.
724-292-1189
724-396-1140

DONORA 3 bedroom, ground floor, lots of storage, on bus line. $450+ electric. Call 412-302-4656.

SPEERS 2 bedroom town house. $500+ security & utilities. Appliances, central air. No pets. 412-812-2648, 412-812-2947.

3560/APT-RENT/WMLD.

BELLE VERNON 2 bedroom, small, kitchen, bath, living room, porch, 2 car garage. $350+ utilities. 724-823-0750.

3561/APT-RENT/OTHER

MONONGAHELA
Modern 1 bedroom apartment. Air conditioning, refrigerator, stove, elevator intercom, laundry, storage, security. $350 + electric. Call 412-257-0902.

3620/HSE-RENT/WASHINGTON

ELCO 2 bedroom, ½ duplex, newly renovated, close to Rt. 70 & Expressway. $450+. No pets. 724-344-0175.

FINLEYVILLE 2 story, 3 bedrooms, 1½ bath, $525+ utilities, security, references, no pets. 724-348-6969.

LOOKING FOR A FRIEND? CHECK THE PET DIRECTORY. CLASSIFIEDS WORK! TRIB TOTAL MEDIA

3620/HSE-RENT/WASHINGTON

HOUSING
The Washington County Housing Authority is accepting applications for affordable housing in all locations. Applicants may choose to pay an income based rent (30% of family income) or a flat amount which will remain the same regardless of income. Flat rents are a result of a change in regulations for public housing only and are designed to help working families stay in affordable housing. Applicants are screened for criminal behavior and ability to uphold a lease. Applications are available at our public housing sites in Washington, Canonsburg, California, Monongahela, Donora, Fredericktown, Bentleyville and North Charleroi for both elderly and family households. Please call 724-228-6050 for information or locations and times or obtain an application from the internet at http://housing.washingtoncountypa.gov/ EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY. Hearing impaired call TDD 724-228-6283.

3625/HSE-RENT/WMLD.

MONESSEN- 2 bedroom house. $400 month + utilities. No pets. Call 724-736-2771.

MONESSEN- 2 bedroom yard, newly remodeled, appliances included, garage. 420 Forrest. Section 8 accepted. 724-489-4131.

MONESSEN- 3 bedroom, w/w carpet. $420 per month plus. Call 724-872-2775.

MONESSEN 2/3 bedroom house, living, dining, kitchen, small yard, central heat/air. $500+ utilities. Section 8 ok. 724-929-3230.

LOOKING FOR A DREAM JOB? FIND IT HERE. CLASSIFIEDS WORK!

3625/HSE-RENT/WMLD.

N. BELLE VERNON- 2 bedroom, possible 3, full basement. Garbage incl. $375+ utilities. $200 security. $425 w/ all appliances. Call 724-797-3512.

3645/MOBILE RENTALS

DUNLEVY 3 bedroom, living room, kitchen, bath, stove, refrig, dishwasher, laundry hook up. $625+ security. Inc. lot rent, water, garbage, sewage. 724-554-0637.

3700/COMMERCIAL RE

MODERN OFFICE OR RETAIL SPACE
BELLE VERNON
719 Broad Ave., air conditioning, 1,500 sq. ft., off street parking.
MONONGAHELA
215 Chess St. 2,600 sq. ft. Call 412-257-0902.

LOOKING FOR A NEW RIDE? FIND IT HERE. CLASSIFIEDS WORK!

EVERYTHING YOU WANT AND NEED
AUTOMOTIVE
REAL ESTATE
HELP WANTED
CLASSIFIEDS
WORK!
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